

MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

Vol. I

November, 1913

Number II

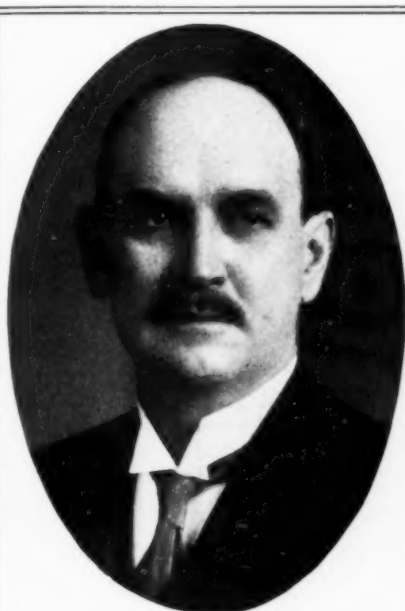
WHAT UNCLE SAM DOES FOR THE FARMER

BY JUDSON C. WELLIVER

TO make the country a better place to live in, so that people already there will want to stay and those not already there will wish to get there; to help it to provide itself with better schools, roads, and society; to lead and aid it in getting closer to the markets in which it must both buy and sell; to encourage cooperative activities in order to reduce the cost of

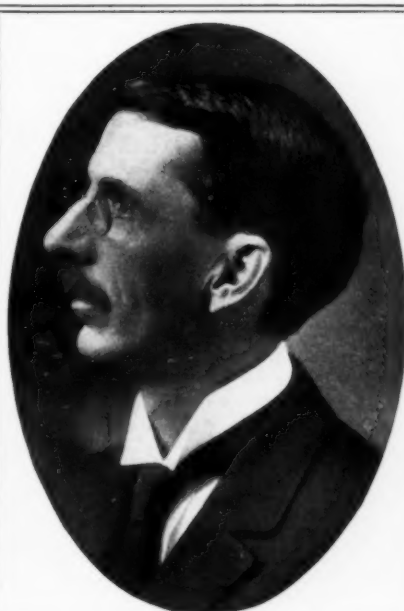
distribution, increase the farmer's profit, and reduce the consumer's prices; to help remove the curse of bad rural sanitation; and, altogether, to influence in the direction of developing a typical American farmer, living on the best kind of a farm.

That is a fair summary of the ambition that moves the present administration of the Department of Agriculture.



DAVID FRANKLIN HOUSTON, SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.



BEVERLY F. GALLOWAY, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

From a photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.

The new Secretary of Agriculture is a college president, not a farmer. He is a student of the social and economic problems of the rural community. Not long ago, at the end of a talk about his ambitions for the department under his direction, he frankly summarized in something like this fashion:

"I suppose our aims and purposes

waits on the development of a better system of distribution, and that presents a most complex economic problem."

Right at the threshold of this transformation of his department into a social and economic instrument, Secretary Houston confesses a very different view of the question of agricultural production from that taken by some other people. He is not at



SENATOR T. P. GORE, CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.



CONGRESSMAN ASBURY FRANCIS LEVER, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

From a photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.

would be reasonably well expressed if the name were changed from Department of Agriculture to Department of Rural Economics."

Which doesn't mean, the Secretary quickly explained, that there is to be less agriculture, but simply more economics.

"The average person doubtless would say," explained the Secretary, "that the Secretary of Agriculture should be a farmer. That would be true if the whole business of the department were concerned with growing corn and oats and pork and beef. In the past the department has dealt with the farmer as an individual, and he is a very individualistic being, anyhow. But to-day greater and better production

all fearful that the farms will cease to produce enough to feed us all.

"We haven't even scratched the surface of the producing capacity of our farm lands," he observed; and so he is concerned more to see the farmer improve his own condition than to induce him to raise more provender for the rest of us to eat.

Now, gentle reader, prepare for a shock. Likely you are one of the millions who in recent years have been reading a vast deal about the possibilities of intensive tillage; of yields doubled and tripled and quadrupled by closer application and more careful management; by cultivating fewer acres and cultivating them better. A great many people have come to believe that the

aim and object of all agricultural betterment is to make two or four bushels of corn grow where only one grew before; to get three bales of cotton where one was looked upon as a reasonable yield.

OWNERS, NOT RENTERS

Know, then, that Secretary Houston and his lieutenants in this reorganization of the

farming community developed here; a community of men farming their own land, not renting it from an absentee landlord; farming enough land so that it shall be possible for them to use plows instead of hoes, and horses instead of hands to provide the power; farming on such a scale that every labor-saving device now known or yet to be produced may be advantageously utilized;



CHARLES F. MARION, LATELY APPOINTED
CHIEF OF THE UNITED STATES
WEATHER BUREAU

*From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*



DR. CHARLES J. BRAND, CHIEF OF THE NEWLY
CREATED DIVISION OF
MARKETS

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*

Department of Agriculture are not lining up with this intensive agriculture propaganda. They don't want American farms reduced to twenty acres, and farmed with the spade and hoe. They see no purpose to be served by getting one hundred and fifty bushels of corn or sixty bushels of wheat per acre, or even by setting that as an ideal to be striven for.

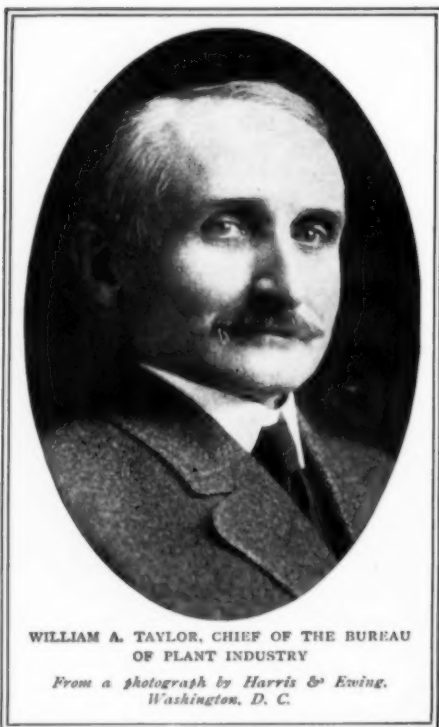
That way, they think, lies not farming efficiency and economy, but rather the danger of developing an agricultural peasantry; and they want, more than anything else, to help the farmer keep away from everything suggestive of a degradation to the status of peasantry.

They want a distinctively American

farming rather more with brain than with brawn.

In that ideal farming community they believe both the land and the people living on it will be better served than under the conditions of intensive farming. They would have the farmer and his own family do a maximum and hired help do a minimum share of the work on each farm, thus adding to the independence and self-sufficiency of each farmstead.

In short, the department thinks that plenty of corn and cotton can be raised without adopting the methods of peasant agriculture, and that a very much better sort of people will be a highly important by-product of the operation. Secretary



WILLIAM A. TAYLOR, CHIEF OF THE BUREAU
OF PLANT INDUSTRY

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*

Houston has an interesting theory that quite the most important thing growing on the farm is the farm family.

NOT THE AMERICAN IDEAL

Intensive agriculture, it is conceded, has its proper place; but in general it is not considered a desirable ideal for this country.

"We know," said Dr. Galloway, the assistant secretary and a veteran in the service of the department, "that some countries in Europe grow two or three times as much wheat as we do per acre. But European wheat, as Europe raises it, would be worth \$2.50 to \$3 per bushel if farm labor there cost what it does here.

"Japanese wheat, if Japanese labor were paid at American rates, would cost \$4.50 per bushel to grow. The wheat of which China raises such large yields per acre would cost \$5 per bushel on the same basis. Human labor is cheaper in those countries than any other kind; cheaper than horses and machinery. The peasant is at the bottom of the social structure.

"It is not possible to see any other outcome to a system of intensive farming than

a system of peasantry. We don't want that in this country; a whole family toiling by hand to raise the utmost possible product from a few high-priced acres owned by somebody else."

To that statement of the department's ideal Secretary Houston added that it is desired to ascertain as nearly as possible



A. C. TRUE, DIRECTOR, AGRICULTURAL
EXPERIMENT STATIONS

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*

the best types of American farm and farmer, and cultivate them. The typical American farm may be of 160 or 200 acres, more or less; nobody now knows what it is; and it will be different in different sections and circumstances. But in general it is desired to find out what it is, how it can best be operated to produce the best people as well as the best pumpkins, the best humanity as well as the best hogs.

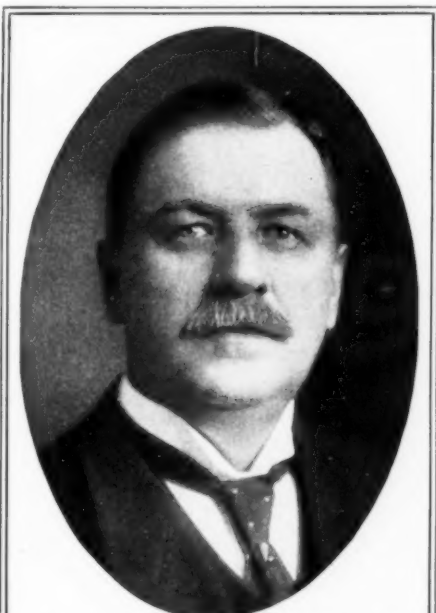
PERILS OF COUNTRY LIFE

"I have thought sometimes," said Secretary Houston, with much apparent relevancy, "that the development of its sanitary facilities was a pretty accurate index of the civilization of a community. I have served as a member of a committee in charge of making a rural sanitary survey

of a group of States, fourteen of them, as I recall.

"On a scale which made 100 represent the nearest to perfection that could be reached, we found the rural sections of those States averaged 6 to 8! In efficiency of country roads, on the same scale, they averaged 10! We think of the country as open and healthy, as it ought to be. But we overlook that the sanitary conditions surrounding the ordinary farm home are thoroughly bad.

"Typhoid fever is now known as distinctly of country origin; the city gets some of it, but it comes from the country, and it tells of bad sanitation. Our Rural Organization Service has these and related conditions in mind; the poor schools, the meager religious and social opportunities.



A. D. MELVIN, CHIEF OF THE BUREAU OF
ANIMAL INDUSTRY

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*

We hope that out of the economic undertakings of the department may come, as a by-product, attention to and remedy for these social deficiencies of the country."

Through such divisions of its work as the enforcement of the game laws, the protection of birds, inspection of meats, enforcement of the pure food law, ad-

ministration of the statutes regulating transportation of live stock, management of the vast national forests, attention to the varied problems of conservation, studies and experiments in road-building, control of the water-powers within the national forests, and other regulatory functions, the department is already doing a good deal of work suggestive of Secretary Houston's general idea of making a developmental branch of the government, a department of social and rural economics.

Along the lines of these activities the government is already working rather efficiently toward the general consummation he desires. Also it is contributing in this direction through the useful functions of the rural free delivery, the parcel-post, and the postal banks. Outside the department, but urging in the same direction, are all the agencies which are forcing attention to the need of better rural educational facilities, and the provision of social centers and intellectual pleasures for adults.

The cities and towns have too long monopolized the benefits of progress. With their congested populations it would



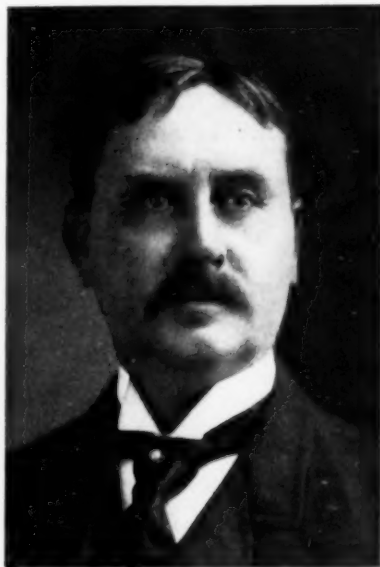
DAVID FAIRCHILD, AGRICULTURAL EXPLORER
IN CHARGE OF FOREIGN SEED AND
PLANT INTRODUCTION

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*



MILTON WHITNEY, CHIEF OF THE BUREAU
OF SOILS

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*



VICTOR H. OLMSTEAD, OF THE BUREAU OF
STATISTICS

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*



J. A. ARNOLD, CHIEF, DIVISION OF PUBLICATIONS

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*

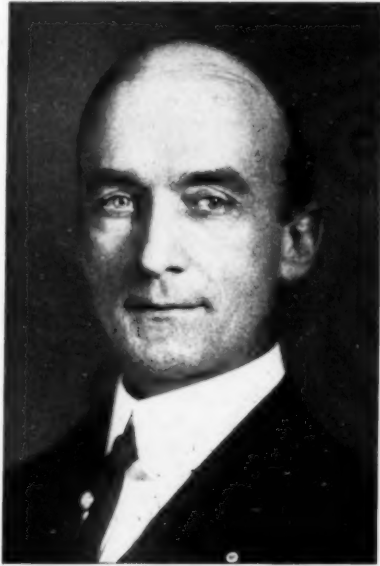
be reasonable to expect that their sanitation would be inferior to that of the country; yet in fact it is vastly superior.

CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS

When it comes to educational facilities and methods a like situation is presented. Last February, while he was yet a plain private citizen and chancellor of Washington University at St. Louis, Mr. Houston went to the Governor of Missouri to discuss that State's rural educational problem, which in general is typical.

Beginning with an exhortation of the State for lack of any system at all, he wound up with some mild, sensible, rather commonplace suggestions for the beginning of reform. Secretary Houston is anything but a revolutionist. He knows that things can't be done all at once; and he knows further that the rural community is exactly like other communities in its dislike for being "uplifted" and "reformed."

He declared that nobody knew the facts about education in Missouri and the waste resulting from duplication and inefficiency. He asked the Governor to take up and urge a program looking to betterment. This



BRADFORD KNAPP, HEAD OF FARMERS' CO-
OPERATIVE AND DEMONSTRATION WORK

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*



LOGAN WALLER PAGE, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
PUBLIC ROADS

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*

program he stated under four headings, thus:

1. There should be a State commission to study the facts and needs and, when familiar with these, to formulate legislation to meet conditions.

2. The investigation of facts would disclose that the wave of educational progress had passed over the rural sections almost without touching. The State should take measures toward consolidation of rural schools in centers, bringing together in each school a large enough number of pupils to make possible their grading and organization as in towns. Where necessary, the public treasury must provide means to transport pupils to these consolidated schools. Such a school should be brought within reach of every country boy and girl.

3. The State should provide a rural high school accessible to all pupils equipped to enter it. The city and town children have these, often better equipped than most colleges. The country must have such facilities brought to it, or its children will either be denied the education or compelled to go away from home for it. The country boy who goes to town for his schooling commonly is lost forever to the farm. He is the very boy the farm needs to keep.



HENRY S. GRAVES, FORESTER

*From a photograph by Harris & Ewing,
Washington, D. C.*



L. O. HOWARD, CHIEF, BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY

From a photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.

4. The State educational machinery was indicted as utterly inadequate. The State superintendent of schools, heading an organization with 18,000 teachers and an annual expense of \$18,000,000, had a budget of only \$33,000, making real supervision impossible. The county superintendent, with 150 schools and 200 teachers under his charge in the smallest counties, had no clerical assistance, no travel expense fund, no supervisory assistance; yet his inexperienced teachers manifestly needed more oversight than the better-equipped and paid teachers of the towns. With the State requiring about 3,000 new teachers annually, there must be provision to supply them through normal departments in the rural high schools, which should issue certificates of qualification.

Such was the program for educational reform that Mr. Houston demanded in Missouri; and he stated his case so well that the Governor adopted it, made it an administration affair, and last winter induced the Legislature to take some long steps toward crystallizing it into law.

That rural educational program, it must be understood, was formulated and passed on to Governor and Legislature before anybody, even Mr. Houston himself, dreamed

that he was going to be Secretary of Agriculture. He was merely doing what he deemed his duty as a citizen.

A lifelong student and analyst of country-life problems, he had pondered education, sanitation, cooperation, and the other departments in which the country was backward, and at every opportunity he reached out to enlist and interest the powers. For many years he had been doing just such work.

In Texas, when a university president there, he had organized a campaign to improve the educational code and wipe out the troublesome constitutional limitations that had made good educational work impossible. The Legislature passed the needed laws, and Texas, under them, has made excellent progress toward better things.

These interests and activities as an educator in Texas and Missouri are set forth thus in detail because they give so accurate an impression of the workings of the mind now directing the Department of Agriculture. He himself outlined these earlier activities as part of the answer to a question as to his plans for the development of the department.



DR. CARL L. ALSBERG, CHIEF, BUREAU OF CHEMISTRY

From a copyrighted photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Houston might be called an institutionalist. He is a builder, a constructor. He has been studying the needs of the rural community and how to fit institutions to supply them. Now, quite as unexpectedly to him as to the rest of the country, he finds himself in probably the most advantageous position in the whole country for carrying forward the projects so carefully wrought out.

It is a good guess that there will be some fundamental institutional reorganization of the department if Secretary Houston can secure it, with the view to making it a better machine for doing the things he wants done. There will be cooperation with such instrumentalities as the Public Health Service, the Commissioner of Education, the Reclamation Service, and others whose functions imply relationship to the work of the Agricultural Department.

FARMING THE DESERT PLACES

An idea of what such cooperation means may be gained from some recent moves in connection with the Reclamation Service. The great projects for reclamation of arid lands in the West are under the Department of the Interior, because it was assumed that these were primarily engineering rather than agricultural propositions.

But when the engineering and construction stages are past, the agricultural aspects must come uppermost. The people living on the reclaimed lands must know how to farm them. It proves that in some cases, while magnificent engineering work has been done, agricultural considerations have had too little attention. Discouragement and loss have at times resulted.

Dams, canals, laterals, tunnels, and ample water supplies are not all that is needed to make an Eden in the desert. To build all these, and then discover that the land or the climate is not adapted to successful agriculture, suggests that the engineering and the agricultural authorities have started cooperating too late. There are suspicions that in some of the reclamation projects exactly that has happened.

In order to make the best of some unfortunate conditions already developed, and to avoid mistakes in future, the Interior and Agricultural departments have undertaken a plan of joint effort. An agricultural director will be established in the Reclamation Service, representing and chosen by the Department of Agriculture, to at-

tend to just such problems at the time when they ought to receive attention. The position is likely to be a very important one in connection with future operations of the Reclamation Service.

A division has been created in the department which will devote itself to general study of rural organization. This is a tremendous undertaking, aiming to reach, ultimately, to all phases of organization.

Is the general scheme of county government in this country thoroughly inefficient, as many believe? Is its inefficiency a serious obstacle to road improvement? This new series of investigations will get around to such inquiries in time. It will concern itself chiefly at present with the problems of rural credits, methods of marketing farm products, and cooperation among farmers.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR MARKETING

The first requisite is a complete survey of conditions as they are; a study, for instance, of cooperative marketing and merchandizing organizations, in the effort to determine why some are successful and others have failed. There are many hundreds of notably successful ones, commonly restricting their business, however, to particular products; as the Colorado cantaloup growers' and the California fruit growers' organizations which consolidate the production of many growers and market it through a single agency.

Why are there not more similar cooperative societies, dealing in a multiplicity of products? Why do not farmers cooperate more in both buying and selling? What are the best models for such organizations?

One day a caller told Secretary Houston that at Rockwell, Iowa, there was a famous cooperative society that marketed practically everything its members raised, and bought for them well-nigh everything they needed; sold their grain, live stock, hay, eggs, butter; bought their machinery, lumber, building materials, groceries, dry-goods, clothes, *et cetera*. It was over twenty years old and a huge success.

"Never heard of it before," confessed the Secretary. He quizzed his visitor, and a few days later sent a trained investigator to Rockwell to study that society in detail and report on it.

TO HELP THE FARMERS BUY

When a general survey of the cooperative activities has been effected, it is planned to

follow with highly intensive studies of particular phases like this at Rockwell. Out of the fund of information thus gathered it will then be in order to make plans suited to different communities and their industries, and to get typical communities to adopt these plans and actually undertake the work of cooperative buying, selling, and marketing.

The example of these operations is expected to arouse general interest and give impetus to a general adoption of the cooperative system, by which the cost of covering the gap between producer and consumer may be lessened to the advantage of both.

Dr. T. N. Carver, professor of economics at Harvard, a specialist in rural economics, has been enlisted as director of this division of rural organization. Dr. Charles J. Brand has been drafted from the University of Minnesota to head the Division of Marketing.

As is well known, the Department of Agriculture has grown into a sort of immense experimental laboratory in agriculture and related subjects. It sends explorers all over the world seeking plants and animals that may advantageously be domesticated here. Its agents, hundreds of them, are stationed throughout the country, teaching and demonstrating to the farmers the methods of better agriculture that scientific methods are constantly devising.

This demonstration work, in charge of Bradford Knapp, is one of the most popular that the department conducts. Plans are organizing for important extensions in these activities and putting a greatly increased number of demonstrators in the field, if Congress will provide the funds.

THE MEN WHO DO THE WORK

The Bureau of Soils, in charge of Dr. Milton Whitney, studies problems in soil adaptability, utilization, fertility, fertilization, and the like. Its aim is to be thoroughly practical, to give actual help to the individual farmer.

Under the Bureau of Animal Industry is a wide variety of activities, directed by Dr. A. D. Melvin, its chief. Here is administered the national meat inspection law and the quarantine law; diseases of animals are studied, animal plagues are dealt with, and in general the problems of animal husbandry, the dairy, and breeding come within this jurisdiction.

Yet a wider range of interests is em-

braced under the Bureau of Plant Industry, such as development of improved plants and seeds, horticultural work, diseases of trees and plants, development of methods for dry-land farming, management of the experiment stations, introduction of foreign seeds and plants, and the like. The bureau's chief is Dr. William A. Taylor.

The Weather Bureau has a new chief, very lately appointed, in Professor Charles F. Marvin, long connected with its activities. Its studies in meteorology are constantly becoming more important and useful to the farmer, as its forecasts are to all classes of people.

No division of the department's work is better known than the Bureau of Chemistry, whose new head is Dr. Carl L. Alsberg. It administers the pure food and drugs law, and is preparing to make a campaign for important amendments which will add to the efficiency of that statute, including authorization under which the bureau may fix and promulgate standards of strength, purity, and content for drug and food preparations.

The Forest Service, like the Bureau of Chemistry, is well known to the public because it has been so much in the public's eye. Headed by Henry S. Graves, it administers the imperial domain of national forests, with a view to conserve and increase the national timber supply and protect the rivers and water supply.

Dr. L. O. Howard, concededly the foremost scientific and practical "bugologist" in the world, manages the Bureau of Entomology, which studies the insect friends of mankind and likewise the tiny pests which destroy stock, crops, and fruit. It has done a work of inestimable value and importance. The Biological Survey, in charge of H. W. Henshaw, devotes itself to both the practical, economic aspects, and also the scientific side, of biological subjects.

FIGURES ON THE CROPS

One of the most useful features of the department's work is carried on through the Bureau of Statistics, of which the chief statistician is Victor H. Olmsted. Here are gathered many thousands of reports on crop conditions, yields, and prospects, and from these are prepared the stated reports of the department which by reason of their general accuracy and excellence very intimately influence the markets for all agricultural products.

Throughout continental United States, the insular dependencies, and Alaska, experiment stations are operated under the Office of Experiment Stations, whose director is A. C. True. The Office of Public Roads deals with practical problems of the country road: how to build them in different localities and with available materials, how to maintain them, and all related subjects.

The new administration of the department has no thought of slackening the zeal with which all these agencies carry on their work. The adoption of a program of economic and social work will simply extend by so much, into a comparatively new field, the activities of the department.

It is necessary that the agricultural production of the country shall go on increasing year by year, because population may confidently be expected to grow regularly.

Indeed, as the demonstration and extension work is expanded by putting more and more demonstrators into the field, it will be necessary still further to expand the operations of the scientists and experimenters, in order that the demonstrators may always be prepared to answer whatever questions come to them.

The field is unlimited, and the ambitions of the department chiefs see almost no limitations to their useful labors, save such as may be imposed by Congress in making the annual appropriations. However useful the work, it cannot be done without money. In the past Congress has been liberal with the department, because its work has been popular and its practical character has been recognized.

One of the projects through which it is hoped yet further to commend the department to the public is a reform in the method of publication. In the past too much scientific and technical literature has been sent out to farmers; matter which scientists have prepared rather for other scientists than for practical farmers. This is being remedied by a sweeping reform in the method of editing and printing the material.

It is to be made simple, concise, suggestive, and informative. A *Journal of Agricultural Research* will be published for the benefit of the scientists, in which the learned elaborations of the experts may be set forth in as much detail as may be desired; but the plain citizen will get his intellectual pabulum served in a style in which he can understand and make use of it.

THE OLD WOMAN AT THE CORNER

WRAPPED in a dingy cotton shawl,
Her wrinkled shoulders against the wall,
The pile of papers her fingers hold
Huddled around her to shield from cold,
The old woman sits with ill-shod feet,
Where the vast White Way and the Avenue meet,
Close to the clamorous tide of life
Just where the North wind stabs like a knife.

Here, when the day is wan with snow,
Here, in the night's uncertain glow,
She crouches and broods on the years long dead,
When she hoed the furrow and plied the thread
In the healthful toil of a farmer's wife,
With husband and children to share her life—
The gray old woman against the wall,
With her gloveless hands and her flimsy shawl.

Here, in the city's ebb and flow,
With the blood in her dim veins running low,
She gathers a penny from time to time,
By selling the stories of fraud and crime,
The daily records of death and birth,
And all the news of the teeming Earth—
The weary woman so thin and white,
In the evening glare or the dawn's cold light.

William H. Hayne

THE CRUSADE AGAINST THE LOAN-SHARKS

THE NATION-WIDE MOVEMENT TO FREE THE NEEDY WAGE-
EARNER FROM A CRUEL AND FRAUDULENT
SYSTEM OF OPPRESSION

BY FRANK MARSHALL WHITE

IN his office in a New York sky-scraper, less than four years ago, there was handed to the president of a big public-service corporation a card bearing the inscription: "Arthur H. Ham, Director, Division of Remedial Loans, Russell Sage Foundation."

The president was not in the habit of receiving any but intimate friends who came to his office except by appointment, but the words "remedial loans" on the card aroused his curiosity. Moreover, the fact that his caller presented himself under the egis of the Russell Sage Foundation was an indication that his errand was not a frivolous one. Consequently Mr. Ham was shown into the president's office.

To the surprise of that gentleman, his visitor seemed to be well under thirty years of age; he was of good appearance and address, and he came right down to business with courteous promptitude.

"I have called," he said, "to ask your good offices on behalf of one of your employees."

"What is his name?" inquired the president.

"Will you permit me to tell his story before I give you his name, with the liberty to withhold it then if I do not feel justified in mentioning it?" asked the young man. "I am sure that you will see the propriety of my request when I have explained the nature of his predicament."

The corporation president was surprised to find himself assenting to this proposition, even while he coincidentally reflected

that he ought to consider it a rather impudent one, coming to a person of his consequence from a young man of whom he had never heard before.

"The man on whose behalf I come to you is at the last extremity at the hands of money-lenders," the visitor said.

The president held up his hand.

"You need go no further," he declared.

"One of the rules of this establishment is that any employee who has dealings with a money-lender forfeits his position. It is a rule in almost all concerns employing a large number of clerks, as we do, and it is a necessary one. Not only does it indicate weakness of character for a clerk to live beyond his salary—which is the only thing that drives him to the money-lender—but it makes him inattentive to his duties. My heads of departments inform me that they can nearly always tell when a clerk is being pressed by money-lenders, because of errors and general slackness in his work. If one of my clerks has violated the rules of the office, he will have to suffer the penalty."

In spite of this dictum the corporation president found himself listening to the story of his employee's misfortunes, which Mr. Ham proceeded to relate as calmly as if it had been demanded of him.

THE STORY OF A LOAN-SHARK VICTIM

"This clerk of yours is a high-salaried man, as clerical salaries go," he said, "receiving twenty-four hundred dollars a year. Four years ago, in order to prevent his son-

in-law from going to prison, this man—I will call him Smith for the present—was suddenly called upon to raise four hundred dollars. He has a large family, and had always lived up to his income, so that he had saved nothing, and there was no one to whom he could go for money except the professional money-lenders, who advertise loans at six per cent per annum and charge anywhere from one hundred to one thousand per cent. A four-hundred-dollar loan is a large transaction for money-lenders of this class, and Smith was obliged to go to four of them to get it, taking one hundred dollars from each. He has not had an additional dollar from them since the first transaction. During these four years he has paid back more than two thousand dollars on his original loans, and he now owes seventeen hundred dollars to twelve money-lenders; for he has been compelled to make new loans to pay old ones—to borrow from Peter to pay Paul."

"Do you mean to tell me that these extortioners have actually made a man pay five times his loans, and still hold him for more than four times the original amount? Why, it's outrageous, it's illegal!" cried the president.

"This year he is paying half his salary in interest on that four-hundred-dollar loan," pursued Mr. Ham; "and even that does not all apply on the debt, for he has to pay a fee each time his notes are extended. He has twelve creditors, as I have mentioned, and his fees to them amount to forty-eight dollars and fifty cents each per month, aside from his payments on the loans."

"Monstrous!" ejaculated the president.

"Smith has never been a spendthrift or a gambler," the young man continued. "He has brought up a family of nephews and nieces, who are just becoming self-supporting, as well as his own son and daughter. There are dependent on him today his wife and her sister and his married daughter and her little boy, the son-in-law having left his wife and their child to be cared for by her father a year after their marriage. Smith is fifty-five years old. He has been in your employ since he was twenty, and he will be able to retire with a pension if he can pull through the year. The money-lenders know this, and are adding every dollar possible to his burden, knowing that he will make desperate

efforts to carry it, because to fail means absolute ruin to him and public charity for those dependent upon him."

"Good Heavens! Why doesn't he tell the money-lenders to take their notes and go to thunder with them?" demanded the president. "They can't collect them legally in the courts."

"If he were to allow a payment to go by," observed Mr. Ham demurely, "the money-lenders would notify you, and under your office rules he would lose his position."

It so happened that the president of the corporation which employed the man designated as Smith was not a hard-hearted person, and his sympathies went out to his clerk in a practical manner. Before he ventured to do anything toward the other's relief, however, he called a meeting of his directors, and asked Mr. Ham to lay the case before them. The result was the adoption of a resolution whereby not only was the rule providing for the dismissal of clerks having relations with money-lenders rescinded in the case of Smith, so-called, but the corporation pledged itself to give him legal assistance in ridding himself of them.

This having been accomplished, Mr. Ham gave the president and directors the real name of the victim, and he was called before them. He came in white and trembling, for he believed that the money-lenders had betrayed him to his employers, and that he had been sent for to be dismissed from service. When the president told him not to pay another dollar of his salary to his twelve illicit creditors, and informed him that the corporation would stand behind him in any legal fight that might ensue, the crusade that is now nation-wide against the Shylocks of the salary loan and the chattel mortgage was begun.

THE CRUEL TYRANNY OF THE LOAN-SHARKS

In 1909, when the Russell Sage Foundation took up the question of the remedial loan, the money-lenders were at the height of their predal prosperity. It was estimated that in every city of the United States of more than twenty-five thousand population, and containing to any appreciable extent citizens dependent on fixed salaries or wages, there were chattel mortgage and salary loan-sharks in the proportion of one to five thousand people,

and that one in every twenty voters was discounting two days' labor for the immediate price of one.

In New York the loan-sharks were doing a business of twenty million dollars per annum, loaning to thirty thousand city employees at interest rates ranging from one hundred to nearly one thousand per cent per annum, and to many times that number of wage-earners in the big public-service corporations, the railroad and insurance companies, the department-stores—in all vocations, in fact, where employees held reasonably secure positions with regular pay.

In Washington, where so great a proportion of the population is made up of clerks in the Federal departments, receiving more than the average salaries and sure of regular payment, the ravages of the loan-sharks brought about, if possible, more human suffering than anywhere else. Chicago was also conspicuously overrun by the money-lenders. It is impossible, however, to say in which of our cities, large or small, the proportion of the victims of the sharks was greatest.

Every dollar of the millions accumulated by these extortioners has been wrung from a man or woman at poverty's last extremity. Each separate unit of their fortunes is the price of human suffering. The jewels with which they bedeck their wives and daughters connote the hunger of children, the anguish of parents, men driven to crime or suicide, and women to the streets.

NATION-WIDE WAR AGAINST THE SHARKS

To-day, in thirty-one of the States, laws have been enacted, or societies have been organized, for the purpose of restraining the money-lender; but the underlying motive is not now so much his annihilation as the creation of conditions whereby he becomes superfluous. The idea is that since it seems to be impossible to make anti-usury laws which he cannot evade, semi-philanthropic organizations shall enter into competition with him, cutting his rates below the point that makes his business worth while.

In 1909 the statute-books of only nine States—Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin—contained laws tending to restrain the depredations of the loan-shark. In 1911 such

laws were enacted in four more States—California, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Montana. Last year Maryland, Mississippi, and Rhode Island, and this year Colorado, Oregon, Indiana, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, and Nebraska came into line, making a total of twenty-four States where Shylock is to-day being hustled aside. In the following five States legislation is now in progress for the protection of the small borrower from the salary-loan and the chattel-mortgage extortioner—Iowa, Texas, Utah, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

In the District of Columbia unusual conditions exist. A measure was brought before Congress in 1910 by the terms of which licensed money-lenders in the District, under governmental supervision and within certain restrictions, would be permitted to charge two per cent a month on loans of less than two hundred dollars. This bill was amended in the last Congress, and as passed and signed by President Taft in February of this year it reduced the rate to one per cent a month. Mr. Ham believes that no loan concern can operate on such terms, and that it means the continuation of shark methods in the District of Columbia.

The year 1912 was the first to witness the actual imprisonment of convicted usurers. In Chicago, in the case of a man who had been made bankrupt by a money-lender who was also a lawyer, a judge gave the loan-shark the choice of giving up his business or being disbarred. In Milwaukee, a millionaire usurer was sentenced to ninety days in jail. In Baltimore, a city magistrate who had been found guilty of acting in collusion with an illegal money-lending concern received a six months' prison sentence.

Recent court decisions indicate that it is the intention of judges to look more and more beyond the form into the actual nature of the transaction, and to discover the real guilt of the violators of the usury laws. The constitutionality of the Massachusetts law, requiring the consent of his wife and his employer in the case of an employee making an assignment of his wages, has been upheld by the United States Supreme Court. In April of this year sixty heads of big industrial enterprises in Chicago, employing an aggregate of one hundred thousand men and women, subscribed funds to crowd out the local

sharks, the scheme being to establish salary-loan facilities, under proper safeguards, for their own employees.

THE MOVEMENT IN NEW YORK

In New York the loan-sharks are in the ultimate ditch. Of probably three hundred money-lenders in active business here four years ago, there are not thirty whose offices are open to-day, and any one of them will gladly accept settlement of outstanding claims on a six-per-cent basis. It is now possible for a borrower who has contracted a usurious loan to go to a magistrate and swear out a warrant for the arrest of a money-lender. If he has been forced to pay usury, he may bring suit to recover twice the excess interest paid in any transaction within a period of two years.

In both civil and criminal cases carried to the Court of Appeals, the law of the State has been interpreted to declare that any person who exacts more than the legal rate of interest on salary or chattel loans is liable to fine and imprisonment; that a greater charge than the legal rate of interest may not be covered by exacting attorneys' fees or commissions, or by any other pretext or device; that assignments of wages given to secure loans are invalid unless a copy is filed with the employer within three days of the actual making of the loan; that a judgment obtained by confession on a usurious loan may be reopened and reversed with costs imposed on the lender, and that usurious loans are void both as to principal and interest.

That the New York loan-sharks have not yet entirely given up the fight, however, is indicated by the fact that two bills, under the terms of which they might have exploited their victims as in previous years, were introduced in the State Legislature last winter. Neither of these bills was reported out of committee, but a substitute bill only slightly less obnoxious than the original bills was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, in spite of the opposition of the Russell Sage Foundation, the New York Legal Aid Society, and the Association of the Bar of New York. It is almost inconceivable, however, that a law so loosely drafted and so obstructive of the progress of the remedial loan movement will remain long on the statute-books of the State of New York.

It is perhaps worthy of note that the

three men convicted of usury in the Court of Special Sessions in New York, who have thus far received prison terms, were low-paid clerks and agents; the principals have either been fined, dismissed, or given suspended sentences.

THE REMEDIAL LOAN SOCIETIES

The rapidity with which the movement for the crowding out of the extortioner has grown throughout the United States could scarcely be better shown than in the records of the National Federation of Remedial Loan Associations, which was organized in 1909. At that time semiphilanthropic societies for the assistance of the small borrower existed in twelve cities of the United States. There were two in New York—the Provident Loan Society and the St. Bartholomew's Loan Association; two in Cleveland—the Economy Building and Loan Company and the Workingman's Collateral Loan Company; two in Boston—the Collateral Loan Company and the Workingmen's Loan Association. In other cities were the Collateral Loan Association of Worcester, the Chattel Loan Association of Baltimore, the Workingmen's Loan Association of Providence, the First State Pawnors' Society of Chicago, the Citizens' Mortgage Loan Company of Cincinnati, the Society for Savings of Washington, the Provident Loan Society of Milwaukee, the Provident Loan Association of Newark, and the Provident Loan Society of Detroit.

All the societies organized since 1909, and many of the others, limit their dividends to six per cent per annum. Since the organization of the National Federation, it has been joined by nineteen new remedial loan societies—the Chattel Loan Company of Grand Rapids; the Equitable Loan Association of Minneapolis; the Provident Loan Society of St. Louis; the People's Provident Association of Louisville; the Welfare Loan Agency of Kansas City; the Chattel Loan Society of New York; the Provident Loan Society of St. Paul; the Provident Loan Association of Utica; the Remedial Provident Loan Association of Paterson; the Provident Loan Association of Sioux City; the Remedial Loan Society of Buffalo; the Provident Loan Society of Rochester; the Public Welfare Loan Association of Indianapolis; the Remedial Loan Association of San Francisco; the People's Loan Company of Portland, Maine; the Provident Loan So-

ciety of Seattle; the Onondaga Provident Loan Association of Syracuse; the Duluth Remedial Loan Association of Duluth; and the Equitable Collateral Loan Company of Youngstown, Ohio.

Other remedial loan societies are in process of formation throughout the country, notably in Portland, Oregon; in Lynchburg and Roanoke, Virginia; and in Denver, Omaha, Oakland, Birmingham, and Jersey City.

THE WORK OF THE SAGE FOUNDATION

The value of the work of the Russell Sage Foundation in mitigating the evil wrought by the loan-sharks in the lives of tens of thousands of the honest and industrious poor cannot be overestimated. The Division of Remedial Loans is the result of investigations of the salary and chattel-loan business by Clarence W. Wasmam and Arthur H. Ham. Its purpose is to conduct a campaign of education with regard to the ills resulting from the commerce in small loans; to encourage the organization of other remedial loan societies, and cooperation between those already in existence; and to educate employers regarding the need for loan facilities among employees.

Prosecution of usurers has not been sought so much as to procure constructive legislation and the formation of competitive societies. The division does not contribute to the capital of new societies, but assists them by furnishing advice and information regarding problems of organization and administration.

To the efforts of Mr. Ham, as director of the Division of Remedial Loans, a large measure of its success is due. At the beginning of his campaign against the loan-sharks he devoted a great deal of time to missionary work among employers, in the manner outlined in the case of the so-called Smith and the president of a public-service corporation.

To one after another of the heads of big commercial institutions he set forth the fact that under our present social system there are great numbers of men and women working for compensation barely sufficient for their every-day support and that of those dependent on them. Illness or death in the family, or any other cause for unforeseen expenditure, means that they must borrow, and that their need is as legitimate as—and more imperative than

—that of the financier who raises money on bankable securities.

Mr. Ham would explain that these small borrowers are divided into three classes, the most affluent of which possess personal property which they can take to the pawnbroker; that the next in order of indigence obtain loans on chattel mortgages covering furniture and household effects that remain in their possession; and that finally comes the man whose only asset is his capacity to earn a salary.

The fact that employers make rules whereby an employee is discharged if it becomes known that he has borrowed on his salary, Mr. Ham told these gentlemen, is a great assistance to the illicit money-lenders; for when the necessity arises, the employee has no one but the loan-shark to go to, and the fear of discharge serves only to give the extortioner a whip to hold over his victim's shoulders.

HELP FROM EMPLOYERS OF LABOR

The first notable victory was achieved in October, 1910, when the directors of the New York Retail Dry-Goods Association recommended to its members that the rule providing for the discharge of employees who assigned their wages to money-lenders should be rescinded, and that such employees as were already involved with the loan companies should be defended by their employers.

In May, 1911, there were brought together under the joint auspices of the New York Merchants' Association and the Russell Sage Foundation more than seventy of the largest employers of labor in the United States, including officers of railroads, insurance companies, banks, public-service corporations, and owners and managers of commercial institutions. After listening to addresses, this gathering passed resolutions that rules of discharge should be rescinded in order to assist employees in resisting unreasonable interest charges.

This influential body of employers further agreed that their employees should be advised to disregard all claims made by money-lenders not in direct compliance with law; that in self-interest, as well as for the benefit of their employees, the creation of cooperative savings and loan associations should be encouraged; and that steps should be taken for the enactment of laws allowing a reasonable rate of interest on small loans, and providing for the

licensing of money-lenders under official supervision and control.

Mr. Ham has allowed no vehicle to escape him that was capable of carrying on his small-loan propaganda. In November, 1911, the Academy of Political Science gave up one session of its annual meeting to a discussion of financial facilities for wage-earners, under his direction. At the convention of Legal Aid Societies in Pittsburgh, the same year, the loan-shark evil was discussed.

The Men and Religion Forward Movement, through its social service committees, has assisted in no small degree in awakening public interest in remedial loans. The International Board of the Young Men's Christian Association and the National Board of Young Women's Christian Associations are now considering the adoption of a plan of cooperative savings and loan associations as an adjunct to their work. Special study is being given to the subject by the Association of Educational Secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association.

Mr. Ham is in continual correspondence with men and women who are engaged in pushing the remedial loan work. He has already addressed meetings of chambers of commerce, boards of trade, and similar organizations in twenty-five cities of the United States, and has visited as many more cities and towns to assist in the establishment of loan societies for the small borrower.

"One of the most difficult tasks of the

division has been to convince persons interested in the remedial loan movement that the small-loan business cannot be conducted on the basis of interest rates allowed to banking institutions," says Mr. Ham. "It seems clear that the small-loan society, having no deposits, must do its business on its capital alone, and in order to pay operating expenses, to meet losses, and to provide a reasonable return on the investment, a rate of interest of from one to two per cent a month must be charged. Refusal to recognize this fact has frequently been encountered among legislators, and even business men and social workers have difficulty in seeing the necessity for this higher charge.

"The progress of the remedial loan movement, therefore, is indicated not only in the number of remedial loan societies organized, but also by the evidence of increased knowledge among the general public of the evils of the usurious money-lending business, and of the need for emergency loans among people with moderate incomes, together with an understanding of the necessity for the enactment of laws that will invite adequate facilities for loaning at reasonable interest rates."

One of the results of Mr. Ham's work is the semiphilanthropic Chattel Loan Society of New York. This was organized last year, and has already demonstrated the economic proposition that money may be loaned at a profit on household goods at two per cent a month plus a small investigation fee.

THE SCOFFER

He stands alone within the darkened room,
Silent and chill, from which her spirit fled;
With stony gaze, unheeding of the gloom,
He looks upon his dead.

But yesterday, a withered blossom blown
By fleeting time from off the tree of life
And lost within the fathomless unknown,
This lived, and was his wife!

But yesterday, an alien unto grief,
Untaught by woes that now upon him weigh,
He scorned her faith, he mocked at her belief;
He cannot scoff to-day.

He flings himself beside the senseless clay,
Dry-eyed; no tears have lightened his despair.
His trembling lips have never learned to pray,
Yet now they move in prayer!

R. G. Taber

THE WHITE GHOST

BY FRANK CONDON

AUTHOR OF "THE GLOBE-TROTTER," ETC.

WITH A DRAWING (FRONTISPIECE) BY WILLIAM B. KING

IF your memory is retentive and if you have been a fair-to-middling reader of the newspapers for these last few years, you may recall that one Knut Nelson came into prominence among the public prints and had his picture published on the first pages, along with Admiral Dewey's gift mansion in Washington, the last round of the Fitzsimmons-Corbett battle at Carson City, and Queen Victoria's Javanese pet pup.

The patriotic American public has long since looked its gift house in the mouth; Fitz and Corbett are somewhere around the continent nursing the old soup-bones that made them rich, and Queen Vic's pet pup is tending door in dog heaven. And Knut—not pronounced Nutt—Knut Nelson is a grizzled, broad-shouldered citizen of Long Island.

For a long time he watered waving wistaria, clipped the clinging carnation, pruned the proud poppy, petunia, and pansy, and performed other alliterative and flowery work as gardener for Elias Poindexter, the New York and Long Island millionaire.

It is some drop, citizens, from the post of driving a racing motor-car to driving the festive chigger off the languorous lily, but Knut Nelson was not melancholy nor humbled. The powerful fingers that clutched the old steering-wheel in the salad days at the birth of the new century went gently at the new tasks.

Knut is growing older, but so is Elias Poindexter. Together master and man walk proudly through the Poindexter estate at Stony Gables. Poindexter considers that his old driver is worth a million dollars to him, and the Danish gardener will

slay you on the spot if you speak unkindly of his employer.

Stony Gables is the pride of the community in the flat Long Island county east of Jamaica. Its stone towers reach up two hundred feet and its great red wall, a mile or more in circumference, gives the estate the appearance of an ancient English feudal demesne. The Poindexters spend most of the year at Stony Gables. Their town house is deserted, except for servants, during all the months but January and February. Knut Nelson, with his wife and children, resides in a comfortable cottage a stone's throw from the Gables, and now he has money in the bank, a life job, and deep contentment.

If you were to step from the express and visit Stony Gables as a favored guest, Elias Poindexter would take you about the grounds and show you many things. But first of all he would lead you into his garage and there, among the brightly painted fleet of motor-cars, mounted upon a throne and draped with velvets and silks, he would show you the White Ghost—and if he liked you he would tell you the story, with Knut Nelson standing by and nodding delightedly.

Back in those old, vague, misty days, when you thought the next twelve years would be so different from the way they turned out to be, Knut Nelson drifted in with the immigrant tide, landed at Ellis Island, showed unquestionable credentials, and, within a fortnight, entered the employment of Elias Poindexter, the Wall Street operator and motor-car enthusiast.

The Dane had already established a reputation in the old country for daring and skilful race-driving. He had broken

three or four European records, had won races from fifty miles to two hundred, and had fed the odor of his petrol to some of the fastest French drivers of the period.

Poindexter was pleased with his new man. Motor-cars were new and strange objects, and racing, in America, was just beginning to kick its legs and claw at the counterpane. In wise old Broadway the crowd rushed to the curb to watch the passage of the horseless vehicle and to comment pessimistically upon its future.

One fine afternoon a new machine rolled noiselessly through the city's streets, a marvelous motor-car of pure white, with a massive curved hood and huge tires. It was the White Ghost, imported from France by Elias Poindexter, and at the wheel, conscious of his importance, sat Knut Nelson. The newspapers gave it a paragraph or two the following morning.

Avoiding tiresome statistics, it can be stated here that Knut Nelson and the White Ghost stood American racing automobilia on its head. Millionaires banded together and constructed costly roadways, courses were leveled out in New York State and elsewhere, and on any fine afternoon down Long Island way you might behold a long cloud of dust arising from the surface of the earth and know that Knut Nelson and the White Ghost were out on a practise spin, or were wiping up a flotilla of high-priced machines, the owners of which were under the impression that they were racing Elias Poindexter.

It mattered not to the Dane whether daredevil young sons of affluence drove their own cars or employed for that purpose speed-kings of Europe whose names were spelled principally with "z's" and "s's." Knut and the Ghost gathered in cups and banners, medals and prize-money, wagers and other loose articles connected with automobile racing until Poindexter was forced to set aside a room in Stony Gables to contain the proud junk.

The White Ghost seemed to be the champion. Any wealthy citizen owning a machine and having doubts about the Ghost's superior speed could merely drop a postal to Stony Gables and Knut Nelson would fill the gasoline-can and wander down to the White Ghost with the information.

Those two were pals, if ever the condition of paldom existed between animate and inanimate. Knut loved every bolt and

bar in the big French machine, and impulsive persons declared that they had seen Knut walking around the Stony Gables grounds with the Ghost following him like an affectionate elephant.

Day or night, rain or shine, the racing car glistened and shone like my lady's favorite stomacher. Knut went over the Ghost with sheets of chamois skin and growled ferociously if he found a spot of oil or mud. Those were indeed the palmy days, and the White Ghost was king.

But the hand of old Daddy Time will not be stayed for man or machine. Elias Poindexter's bald spot increased in area, and so did his wealth. Knut Nelson's short, brown mustache shaded off to gray and the furrows deepened in his face. The Poindexter boys went into Wall Street with father, and Zelma Poindexter came home from the finishing school with a perfect finish.

With the added years came added motor-cars with modern fixings and jiggers unknown to the White Ghost. In the Poindexter garage at Stony Gables half a dozen aristocratic machines lounged over their drip-pans; limousines, touring-cars, and roadsters, with their ten-inch upholstery, disappearing seats, electric lights, and self-starters.

The business of making automobiles had thrived. Improvements came in so rapidly that it was difficult for even a millionaire enthusiast to keep pace with them, and in the course of time the White Ghost glided upon the elevator and was lifted to the second floor.

With his own hands Knut Nelson guided the old king to a darkened corner, and there, behind a defunct thrashing-machine, the Ghost folded its ancient hands and rested. Knut shed a tear or two and went down-stairs to take up his new work. With the kindest of feelings his employer had shifted him. A brisk young Irishman came into power. His name was Eugene Collins and, in the Poindexter livery, he was a smart, fashionable figure.

"You and I are growing old and fat, Knut," Elias Poindexter said, patting the driver on his broad back, "and I guess we've reached the point in the road where we turn the wheel over to younger hands. You're going to stay with me until you want to leave. Stony Gables will be your home till they send the big wooden box for you."

"Very well, sir," Knut answered a trifle mournfully. "I'm very fond of you, sir, and I want to stay. I've always liked flowers, so I'll get along with this new job pretty good."

It was perfectly true that Knut was growing stout. Zelma Poindexter, fresh from the finishing school, had observed his rotundity with a frown and had decided that a fat driver detracted from the *tout ensemble* of the car.

Thereafter the Dane had nothing to do with the Poindexter motor-cars. Chauffeur Collins, whose mechanical knowledge was a joke in Knut's eyes, drove the family to town, took them to race meets, waited in front of theaters, and filled the position acceptably to all concerned.

True, in the opinion of Mr. Nelson, the Irish chauffeur's morals might have been of a whiter hue. There was no particular doubt in Knut's mind that the new chauffeur had secret trade agreements with the supply dealers and that soft dollars came into his pockets through unknown rebates. Collins, at times, took to the flowing bowl, which is a habit to be avoided by Class A chauffeurs.

But what troubled the old driver was a vague knowledge of growing intimacy between Collins and the Poindexter girl. The chauffeur was a handsome, strapping chap, with a pair of laughing blue eyes and a ready tongue, and the long trips in the machine, with Zelma as the only passenger, sometimes worried the Dane.

He said nothing, because there was nothing to say that would not be impertinent, but he watched. Day after day he watered his flowers and studied botany from a thick book and wondered whether Elias Poindexter would approve of a chauffeur son-in-law of not particularly admirable character.

His leisure hours the old race king spent on the second floor of the Stony Gables garage unknown to any one, and there he talked things over with the White Ghost. Useless and unused, the proud flier of by-gone days dreamed away the hours beneath its canvas covers, but there was never a day when Knut was too busy to climb the stairs and lay a friendly hand upon the curved white hood of the old speeder.

He found a reminiscent pleasure in cranking her up and listening to the sharp hum of the engine that had once made other engines look foolish. He went over

the spark-plugs as though he believed he might be called upon that afternoon to take the old-fashioned wheel and streak away through Long Island scenery. With the hand of an expert he touched up the old-style carbureter and magneto—antiquated in form, but proud with memories of great achievements. He filled the oil-cups with scrupulous care and polished the enamel as regularly as he had done in the days when the White Ghost was a steady newspaper topic.

"You've been a good old girl," Knut told the White Ghost, "and you've earned your rest, but you're a long ways off from the junk-heap and you'll be all here when some of those sewing-machines down-stairs are made over into needles and hatpins. You ain't got any ventilating wind-shield; you wouldn't know a speedometer if you had one, and your old engine looks like a jam boiler, but there was a time when we made them all look at us, hey, Ghost?"

Whereupon the Dane caressed the Ghost once more, replaced the canvases with great preciseness, and opined that the tires needed inflation.

"You know," Knut said to his wife over the corned beef and cabbage, "sometimes I think that old car talks back to me and I can't understand her. I suppose it's just my foolishness. They'd probably scold at the house if they knew how much time I waste up there with the Ghost. It's all of four years since she's been out of the garage, and I wouldn't be surprised if she'd forgot how to go. One of these nights I'll sneak her out for a run."

Nothing happened from that day forward until the 20th of August. At Stony Gables affairs went along smoothly. Young Collins filled his job acceptably. Knut Nelson tended to the flowers. Zelma Poindexter remained at Stony Gables, and Elias motored morning and night between Wall Street and the country.

At four o'clock on the afternoon of the 20th the gardener of Stony Gables beheld a strange spectacle. The big touring-car, regarded by Elias Poindexter as the apple of his eye and the pride of the establishment, glided up to the entrance of Stony Gables, having made the run from New York City in record time.

The millionaire stepped from the car and ran briskly up the steps. The Dane stared at Chauffeur Collins in surprise, because, instead of starting immediately for

the garage, the car remained at the entrance of Stony Gables. Two minutes after her father had entered the house Zelma Poindexter appeared, carrying a small bag, which she tossed into the tonneau of the machine. Then she leaped up beside Driver Collins—and *kissed him*.

Petrified with amazement, Knut watched the car disappear through the gates, and as its low hum grew fainter he suddenly realized that the time had come for action. The watering-pot dropped from his hand and he sped across the lawn, up the steps, and into the hall of Stony Gables, and as he pulled open the door the faint croon of the motor-horn came to him from over the distant fields.

Elias Poindexter, coming down the stairs, was suddenly confronted by a wild-eyed gardener who swung his cap in a circle and gasped:

"She's gone; they've gone together! They've run away—skipped out with the machine—eloped!"

"Who skipped out?" the millionaire demanded. "What are you talking about? What's the matter with you?"

Briefly, and with great speed, Knut described what he had seen, and before he had reached the end of the sentence Elias Poindexter turned and ran up the stairs at a gait rather amazing for one of his years and avoirdupois. He thrust open the door of his daughter's room. On her dressing-table lay a letter directed to "my dear parents" and its contents were simple and direct. These were the words:

We are going to be married, Eugene and I. We love each other dearly. It will be useless to follow.

"Useless!" Elias bellowed. "Useless! The scoundrel—the good-for-nothing rascal and the fool, fool girl! Knut! Get out one of the machines. We'll go after this Collins, and when we get him I'll pull his worthless head off and feed it to him!"

Mr. Poindexter indulged in a number of other pointed expressions. Other members of the family had not returned to Stony Gables and were consequently unaware of the exciting events. Following his puffing master, Knut galloped down the stairs and across the lawn to the garage, and a moment later master and driver became aware of a sickening fact. Chauffeur Collins had planned the skip-off with some attention to detail. One of the details was that the

garage was empty—the other cars were in town, one for engine repairs, the others for mythical tire troubles.

"Which way did they go?" Elias demanded, mopping his face and turning a despairing look upon his gardener.

"Down the old road, to the right," Knut replied. "And he got away fast."

"They're heading for Newton," Elias moaned. "That Irishman has probably arranged to have a minister meet them, and here we are without being able to raise a hand! I wonder if I could telegraph! Could I catch a train and get there in time to save that foolish girl of mine? What can I do? Say something, you imbecile!"

The millionaire grasped Nelson by the shoulder and shook him vigorously. The Dane began to smile, softly, largely, and happily.

"We'll get 'em, Mr. Poindexter," he shouted. "They'll never reach Newton ahead of us. We've got a machine here, and if you'll lend a hand, we'll have the Ghost after them in three minutes!"

"The Ghost?" Elias sneered. "Man, this is no time for joking. That old—" But Knut Nelson was at the throttle of the elevator and half-way up. Elias sat down, panting, and presently he heard a familiar sound from above—a soft rumble, followed by a series of staccato blasts. The White Ghost was moving slowly across the upper floor of the garage to the elevator, blinking her eyes and wondering, and old Knut Nelson was walking slowly beside her, his hand on the wheel and a blaze of pleased excitement in his eyes.

The elevator came down slowly and a shaft of afternoon sunshine struck the polished hood of the Ghost. Elias gazed at the old favorite in amazement. Knut Nelson galloped about the stone floor of the garage. He tossed a pair of goggles to Elias, who put them on mechanically. It was the work of minutes to fill the enormous tank with gasoline. Knut's old greasy cap came from somewhere and settled over his thinning hair and, while Elias bustled about uselessly, getting in his driver's way and making pessimistic outcries, the Dane accomplished wonders.

And in the mean time the White Ghost purred and trembled in the deserted garage. She was going out into the light of day; she would feel the whip of the wind against her radiator and the clutch of the graveled road on her tires.

"Get in!" Knut commanded, and Elias obeyed. The Dane leaped into his place behind the enormous wheel, gave her the spark, and dropped his foot on the clutch.

"We're off!" roared the four exhaust-pipes, and in a cloud of yellow smoke, with the red flame spouting from her side, the racer of former years roared down the runway to the road. She passed through the entrance to the estate and out upon the course that had once been familiar ground, and while the two men leaned back in the bucket-seats the Ghost cleared her throat and took up the work at hand.

One minute after she had made the turn and entered the public highroad her engine was drinking the gasoline with its old appetite, her pipes were rattling like a battery of Gatlings, pebbles and rocks were flying into the air behind her, and the telephone posts were checking off the speed at the rate of fifty miles an hour.

"Can she stand it?" Elias bawled against the gale.

"Sure," Knut said grimly. "Wait till I show you."

The White Ghost, warming to the job, climbed toward sixty miles. The road was level and straight, there was no traffic to impede progress, and the clamor from her exhaust-pipes warned for a mile ahead.

They went through Sonoma at forty miles, in deference to the ten-mile speed law, stopped for an instant to inquire whether the Poindexter touring-car had been seen and, receiving an affirmative answer from the inevitable group of cigar-store loungers, picked up the trail with renewed enthusiasm.

In the old days Poindexter had often ridden with his race-driver and had not been afraid. But he had grown slightly older and now he preferred a pleasant twenty-mile gait. He crouched in his seat, expecting death at any minute, but happy in the thought that Eugene Collins was coming back to them. His ten-thousand-dollar modern car had plenty of speed, but nothing that ran on wheels could get away from the White Ghost that sunny afternoon.

Country villages went by like misty visions. An occasional countryman atop his load of produce sought the farthest side of the ditch and peered at the white specter that flashed by.

"They are evidently in a great hurry," the White Ghost reflected. "And I wonder why?"

A small cloud of dust arose far down the road—the highway that had once been part of a famous race-course. Many a time the Ghost had hurled itself along that path.

Out of the cloud of dust appeared the broad, red back of the Poindexter touring-car, and then it was that the complacent Collins turned in his seat and discovered a most surprising thing—a white, dusty, roaring motor-car of ancient make pursuing him.

Zelma Poindexter looked over her shoulder at the pursuers and began to cry. From an easy, contented thirty miles an hour Collins leaped ahead, and then began a race that never has been entered in the official chronicles.

Newton was still in the distance when it started, but Chauffeur Collins now desired nothing of Newton, and the waiting minister could cool his heels. The principal idea in the Collins mind was to escape. He had a distinct picture of what would happen when Knut Nelson and Elias laid avenging hands upon him, and in his pocket was a thousand dollars of Zelma's money.

Eugene Collins was a chauffeur, but Nelson was a race-driver and, if Collins drove a modern prodigy of speed and power, Knut knew the White Ghost and the Ghost knew the road. The speed of the two cars was almost even for a few moments, but the Poindexter Royal Empress was swaying from side to side under the terrific impetus of her ninety horsepower engine and the frightened girl beside the chauffeur sat with her hands over her eyes. The Ghost traveled like a bullet, straight, unswerving, and as steady as a clock.

Slowly the Royal Empress came back and Knut grinned beneath the layer of dust on his face. Conversation by Elias was impossible on account of the Ghost's roaring exhaust and Eugene Collins began to comprehend the feelings of the Turks in the flight from Lule Burgas. There was no denying the White Ghost. The ancient was fighting the modern, and the ancient was winning, with Denmark triumphant over Ireland.

Without warning the Royal Empress began to slow down. The race was over, but its end came abruptly. The rear wheels of the touring-car struck a rut, swerved violently, and in another instant the Em-

press skidded the width of the road, smashed into the ditch, and overturned. Ten seconds later the White Ghost glided up beside the wrecked car.

From the ditched machine Collins emerged, gazed about him stupidly, and then began to run. He crossed a patch of growing cabbages, gaining in speed as he ran, and an instant later disappeared in a field of corn.

Poindexter and Nelson jumped from the Ghost and dragged Zelma from under the car. She opened her eyes as her father gathered her in his arms, and a few moments sufficed to determine that she was not badly hurt. Elias was laughing, crying, and using profane language. Knut stood by, calmly clearing the grime from his goggles. The incident, so far as he was concerned, was ended.

When his daughter finally stood on her shaking limbs Elias gave thought to the vanished chauffeur. With difficulty Knut persuaded him to abandon further chase, and pointed out that the defeated eloper was beyond capture.

"Let him go," Knut advised. "He's no good, anyhow. And no harm's been done."

Then Knut busied himself about the battered object that had once been the Royal Empress, while Elias put his arms about his daughter and comforted her.

And if an old-fashioned motor-car can smile, the White Ghost indulged in a triumphant grin. A streak of white across the grime on her radiator helped carry out the illusion. Dusty, covered with specks of the flying oil, her engine humming ir-

regularly, she stood in the road over her vanquished foe, coughing now and then in a conscious and thoroughly self-satisfied manner.

On the way back to Stony Gables Elias held his daughter in his lap. There is no room in a racing car for a woman, but the Ghost was not inclined to resent it after the happenings of the day. Word was left for the salvage of the wrecked Empress. Elias scolded Zelma with kind words, and Knut Nelson gazed over the wheel with dreamy, happy eyes.

Just before the returning party entered the portals of Stony Gables Elias said, somewhat huskily:

"We've got to have a new driver."

"That's right," Knut replied.

There was a pause.

"I wonder," continued the millionaire, "whether you'd consider giving up the garden work, Knut? How would you like to take charge of the cars around here?"

The Dane looked at his employer and started to speak. But words failed him. He merely nodded.

"Very well, Knut," Elias said. "You're the new boss. And you'll stay boss till you retire. Here we are, Zelma."

And that's about the end of it—except that the White Ghost now loafs away the days on a sort of throne Knut constructed. Elias Poindexter has shoals of cars, big and small, and the White Ghost certainly isn't comfortable or extremely handsome; but you couldn't buy it from old Poindexter with the wealth of Ind, which is said to be an exceedingly affluent place.

THE MEANINGS

My thought of you is as a strain of song
That lulls the hushed air with cadence fleet
And flits away into the listening night,
But leaves within the heart a rapture sweet.

My thought of you is as a rose that hides
Within its heart the dew of perfume rare
Blown freshly out on life's great thoroughfares
And bringing toilers dreams of green fields fair.

My thought of you is as a bugle-call
That with its silver music mounts the strife
And reaches down to cheer me where I fail
And bid me face again the swords of life!

Arthur Wallace Peach

NEW YORK'S OWN PANAMA

SINGLE-HANDED, THE EMPIRE STATE IS BUILDING A THREE-HUNDRED-MILE BARGE CANAL FROM THE HUDSON TO THE GREAT LAKES

BY EDWARD HUNGERFORD

A STOUT, important-looking man in a suit of pongee and wearing a Panama hat sat in a day-train from New York to Buffalo one day last summer and gazed idly out of the window. His suit-case was close beside his chair and upon it were the tags of the Hotel Tivoli at Ancon. And when a man across the aisle of the car looked sharply at the tags, the stout man in the light suit smiled upon him—rather patronizingly.

"That's the big job—Panama! That's the job that every American ought to get to see as soon as possible."

The other—he was small and wiry—merely nodded, nodded again and again as the gentleman who had fallen victim to the steamship literature and made the not altogether comfortable trip to the Isthmus described the spectacular features of the great American canal.

"I tell you," said the important-looking man, "you've got to hand it to 'em. And if you want to see big engineering you've got to get down there—"

The smaller man interrupted.

"Have you looked out of the window within the past hour—ever since we left Schenectady?" he demanded.

The big man nodded. His uninterested eye had caught glimpses of dredges straining in the marshes, of contractors' trains toiling along from the river-bank to spoil-heaps in the background, of derricks and cranes and concrete-mixers; all in a rather unintelligible mass.

"Suppose they're tinkering with the Mohawk—fixing its power, perhaps?" was his single comment.

The smaller man smiled.

"They are building a second Panama," was his explanation.

"A second Panama?"

"Hardly less. Only the great waterway which the State of New York is building to connect the Great Lakes, with a traffic already larger than many salt seas, and the North Atlantic, is more than 300 miles long as against the 50 miles across the Isthmus. If the new barge canal will not take a *Mauretania* or a *Dreadnought*, it will carry a vessel 300 feet long, 35 feet wide, drawing 10 feet of water, a plain, unsentimental cargo-carrier of some 3,000 tons burden, or equal to a long and heavily laden freight-train.

"It has in its 68 modern concrete locks a total liftage of 1,070 feet, as against the total lockage lift in the six pairs of gates at Panama of 170 feet. And even with its smaller capacity it represents a total excavation of 114,100,000 cubic yards as against 203,000,000 cubic yards at the Isthmus. It has a good deal more than half the amount of concrete.

"And you must remember that the United States government, with all of its resources and its ninety million people, is not building this second Panama. It is being built by a single State of not more than nine million people, in order that its benefits may be shared by every State whose shores reach the borders of the Great Lakes."

By this time the big man had been properly impressed.

"Tell me about it," he asked humbly.

The smaller man began. He was a division engineer on the work and well versed in its details.

"Do you remember anything about the

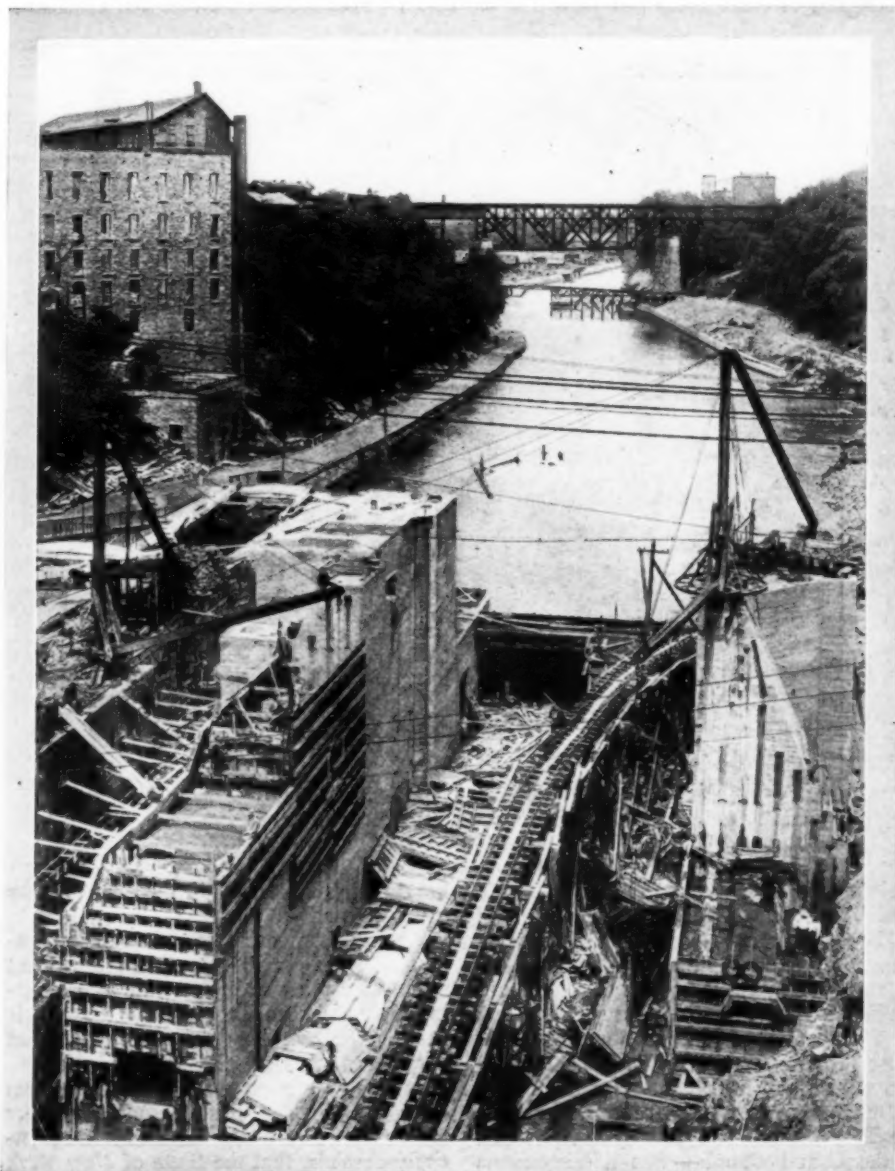
old Erie Canal?" he demanded by way of introduction.

TWELVE THOUSAND INLAND SHIPS

Perhaps you yourself remember the old Erie Canal. If you have ever traveled much in central or in western New York it

hardly could have escaped your attention, as it obtrusively thrust itself through the very heart of such considerable towns as Utica or Syracuse or Rochester.

From the windows of the New York Central trains it was all the while considerably in evidence, with its high-set,



THE HEAVIEST WORK ON THE NEW BARGE CANAL—BUILDING THE CONCRETE FOUNDATION AT THE LOCKPORT LOCKS

white wooden bridges, its stanch old locks and their appurtenances, its steady press of slow-moving traffic. It may have caused you some little delay as you hurried through the busy New York State towns and halted you at its lift-bridges.

But remember that the Erie Canal was the making of those very towns.

Designed to connect the navigable Hud-

and while they were already beginning to widen it and to deepen it to seven feet, there were eight thousand vessels upon the waterway. At the time of the beginning of the Civil War there were more than twelve thousand such craft in steady service between New York and Buffalo. By 1876, though the railroads had taken away some of its trade, there were still ten thousand



THE ENGINEERS TELL YOU THAT THIS LITTLE FALLS LOCK HAS THE HIGHEST
LIFT IN THE WORLD

son with the waters of Lake Erie at Black Rock, since become a portion of the city of Buffalo, it was begun in 1817 and opened for through traffic eight years later. It was a mighty enterprise for a young State—the construction of a canal four feet deep and forty feet wide three hundred miles through what was almost an untrodden wilderness.

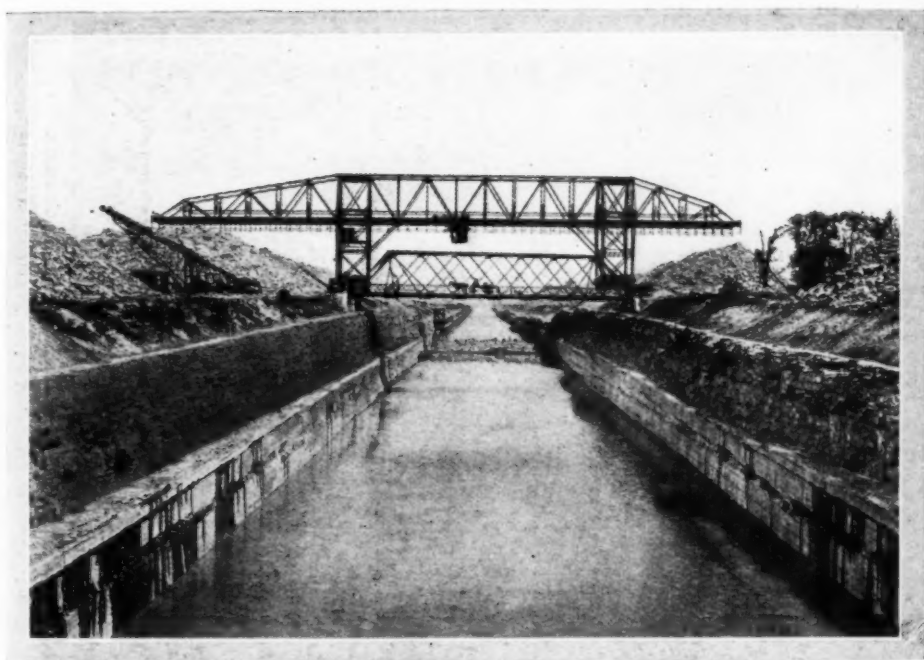
But from the day it was formally opened the Erie Canal—at first they used to call it the Grand Canal—was a tremendous success.

Within a decade after its completion,

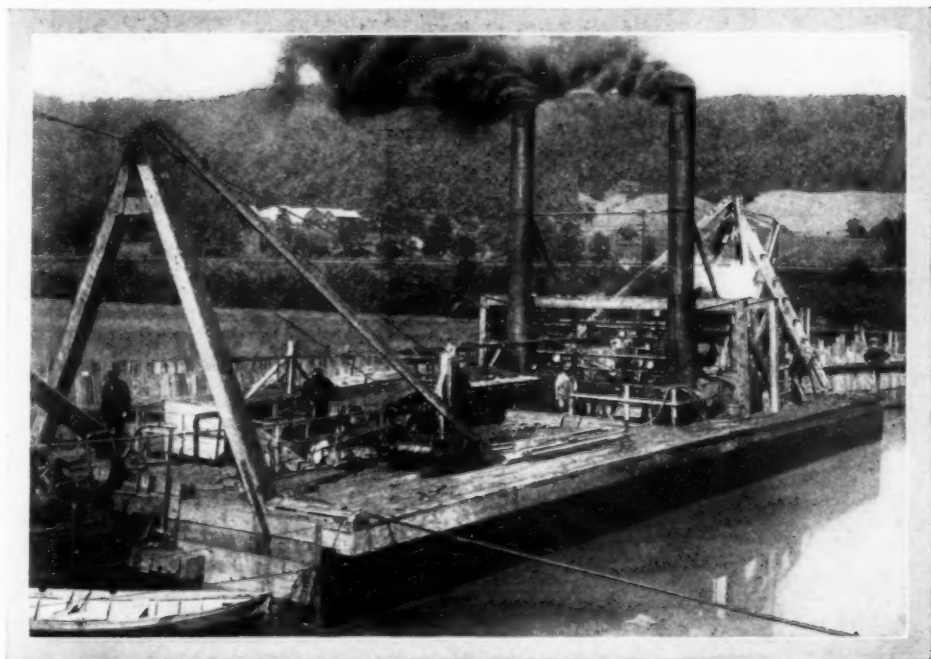
boats plying the waters of the Erie and the adjacent canals.

To-day there are fewer than four hundred of them remaining. The rest of that mighty army have all gone to the last resting-places of canal-boats; you can see their battered hulks rotting in wide-waters and abandoned slips all along the old ditch.

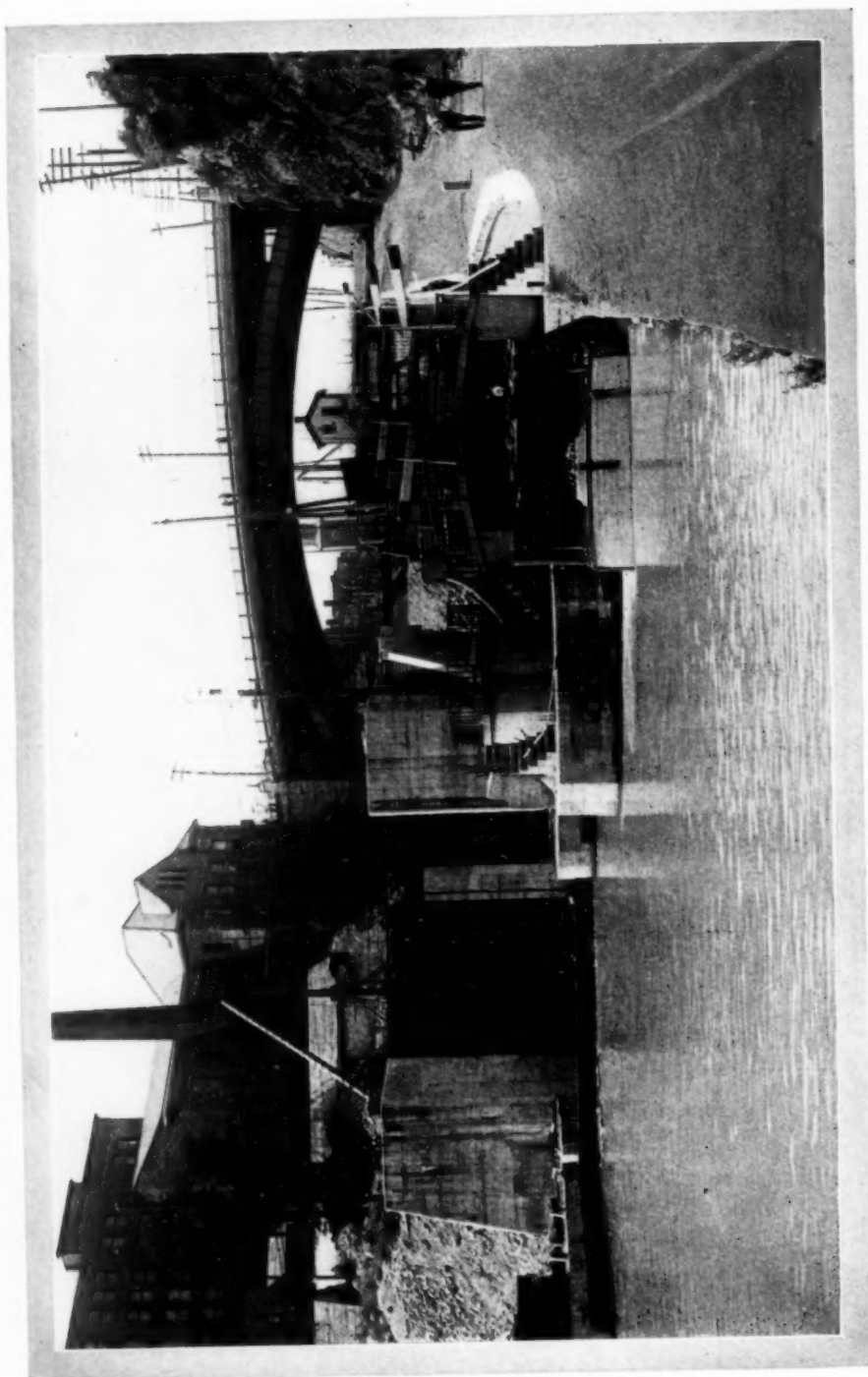
It was to prevent the historic Erie from following the destinies of so many other canals in other States and becoming entirely obsolete, that the State of New York decided some ten years ago to rebuild it into a modern waterway. It had asked



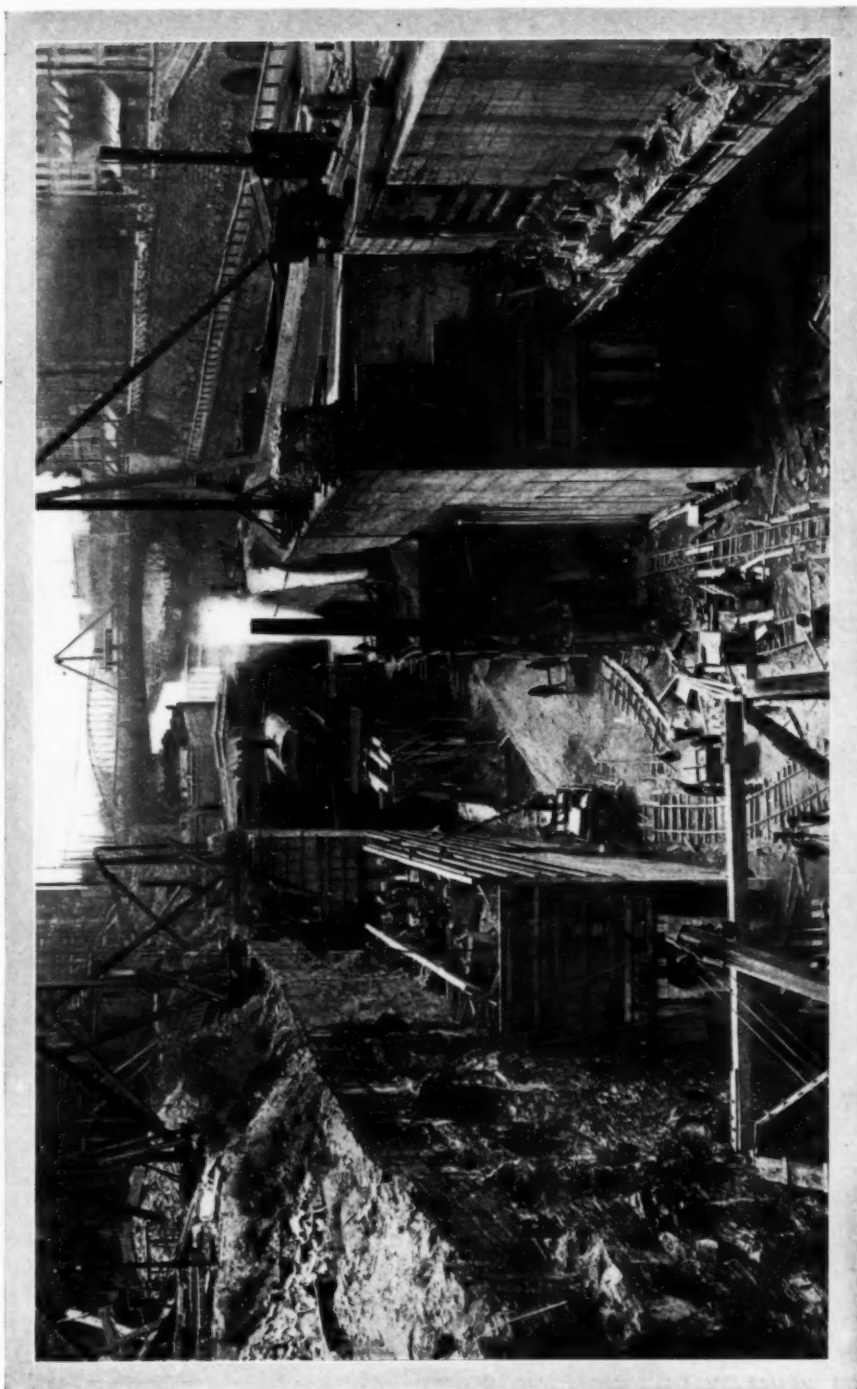
CUTTING THE CANAL THROUGH SOLID ROCK WEST OF ROCHESTER



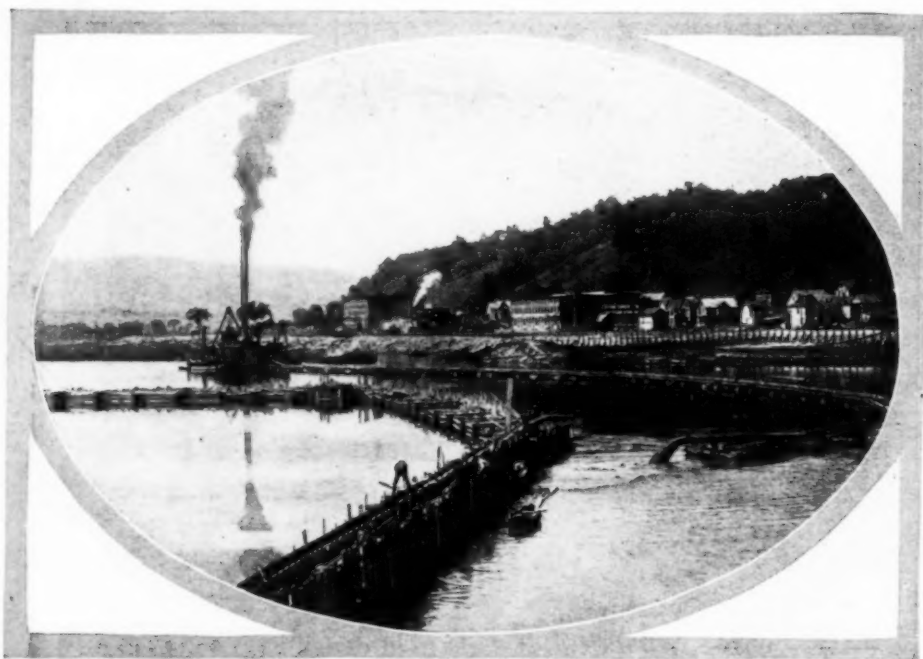
COFFER-DAM WORKS IN THE CHANNEL OF THE MOHAWK



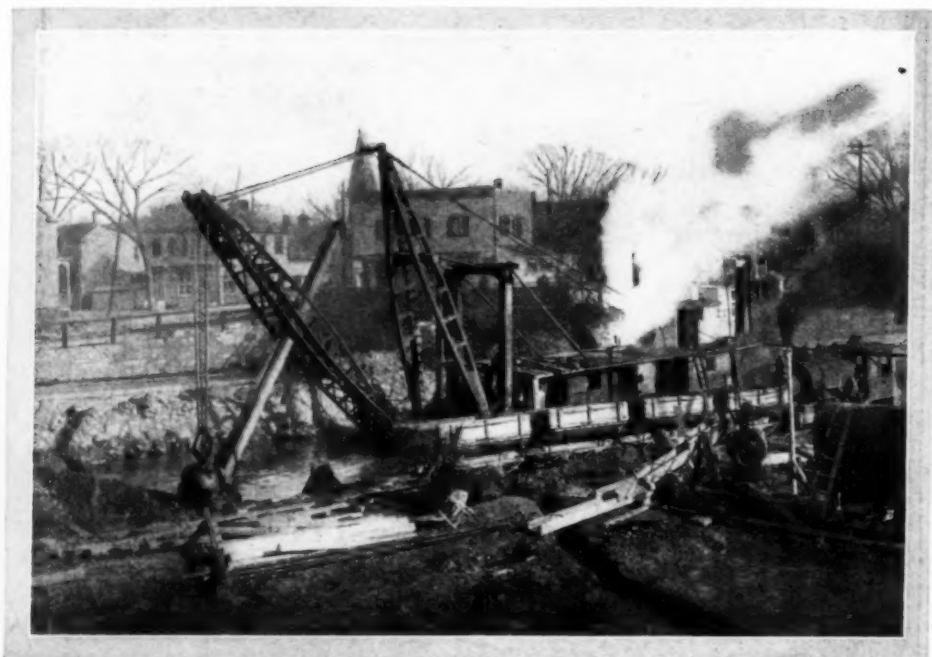
THE NEW LOCKS COMPLETED AT LOCKPORT, AND RISING BESIDE THE OLD, GIVE CLEAR IMPRESS OF THE SIZE OF THE BARGE CANAL.



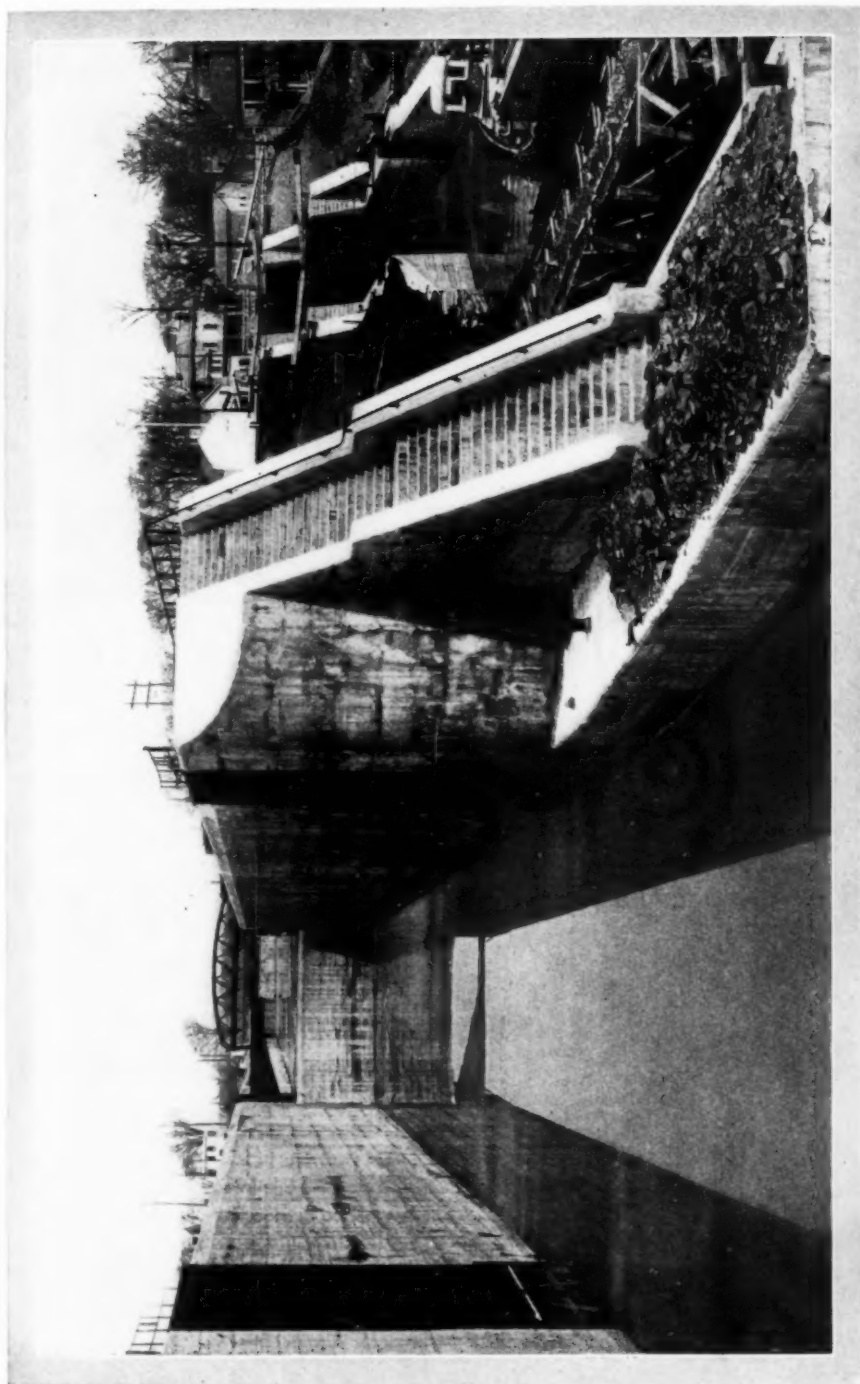
NOT PANAMA—BUT THE UPPER LEVEL OF THE BARGE CANAL THROUGH THE HEART OF LOCKPORT



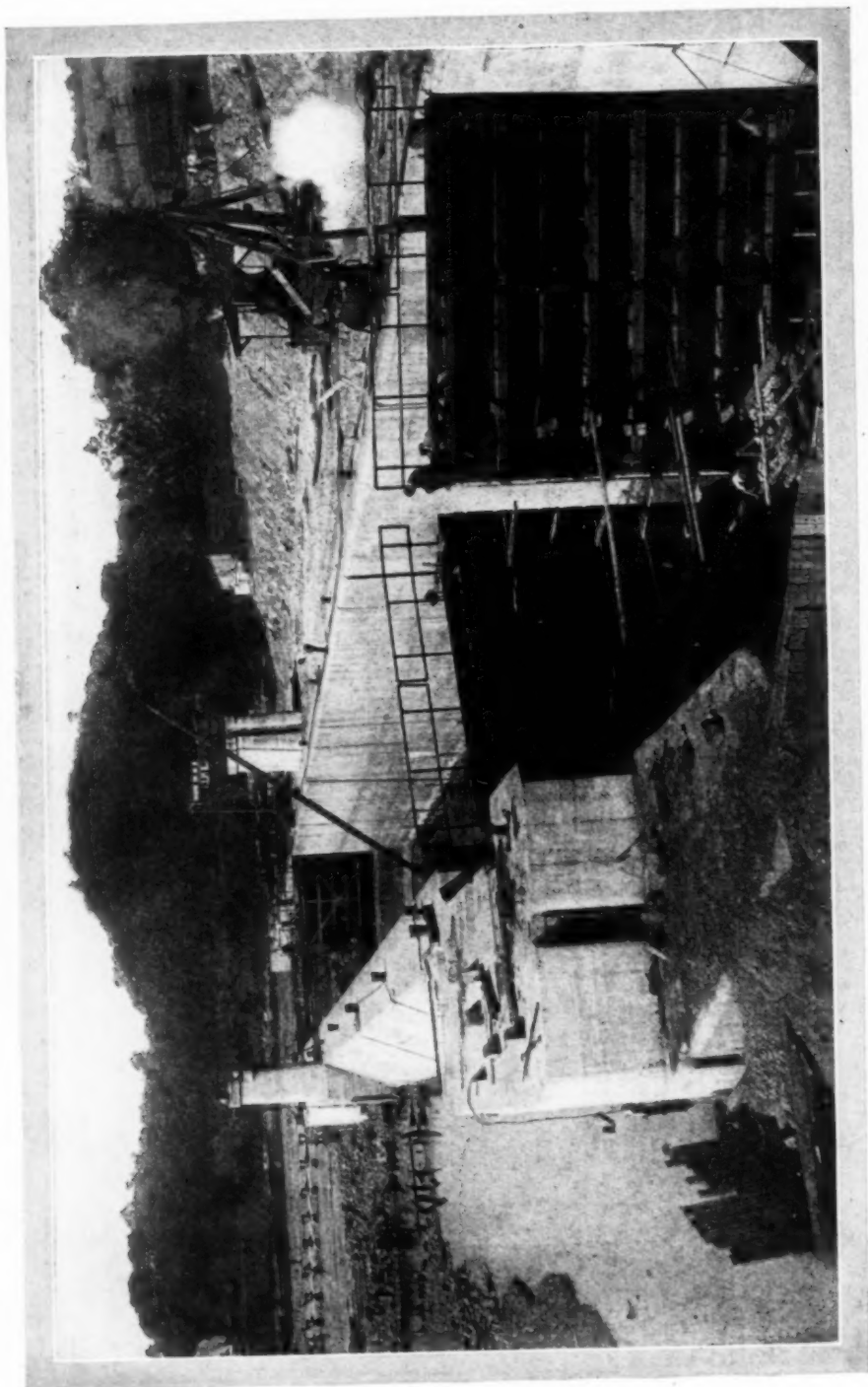
A LONG COFFER-DAM ACROSS THE MOHAWK



A GIANT DREDGE—HARD AT IT



WHERE THE NEW CANAL STARTS, AT WATERFORD ON THE HUDSON. THREE OLD LOCKS OF THE CHAMPLAIN CANAL ON THE RIGHT JUST EQUAL THE HEIGHT OF THE ONE NEW LOCK



THESE GREAT LOCKS, NEAR WATERFORD, WILL MAKE THE MOHAWK AN UPPER HUDSON

the Federal government to reconstruct the Erie into a canal capable of accommodating large and modern craft, because in the largeness of its benefits it is far more than a local enterprise. But the Federal government lagged and showed little interest in the plan.

After that, New York State, at a general election, voted \$101,000,000 for a modern barge canal to replace the Erie between the Hudson and Buffalo, in addition to some rather inconsequential laterals. That sum has since been increased to about \$128,000,000.

After some fearful and tedious delays at the beginning, the work has been promptly pushed during the past few years and, like its wonderful counterpart down at the Isthmus, the second Panama will be ready for large-sized craft early in the summer of 1915.

GOOD-BY TO THE ERIE CANAL MULE

Remember that these craft are to be real cargo-carriers. Instead of boats of 250 tons burden, for the most part drawn by horses or mules, which represent the capacity of the locks along the old Erie, the great concrete locks of the new barge canal will take steam-propelled freighters of 3,000 tons burden. Such a cargo is, as has been stated, equal to a full freight-train — 75 freight-cars of 80,000 pounds capacity apiece.

Moreover, as the new steam-propelled craft can travel two and a half times as fast as the old horse-drawn vessels, moving from Buffalo to Albany in two or three days; the capacity of the new canal thus again is increased.

The physical difficulties which surrounded the construction of this great waterway, from the former head of navigation on the Hudson at Troy to Lake Erie, were tremendous. While much of the canal work can be seen from the windows of the train between Albany and Buffalo, a full realization of the immense undertaking requires both time and a deal of travel. To a man who professes even a slight interest, however, in the works of modern engineering, the barge canal construction is well worth while.

SCOOPING OUT THE HUDSON RIVER

The old Erie Canal began its long cross-country course at Albany, although it had another direct connection with the Hudson

River at Troy. The barge canal begins its actual journey from the Hudson at Waterford, six miles north of Troy.

To that point, and far beyond, the shallow reaches of the upper Hudson are being made navigable as a part of making a deep-water channel across a narrow neck of low country and into Lake Champlain at Whitehall, replacing the historic Champlain Canal and making part of a direct water-route to the St. Lawrence River, Montreal, Quebec, and a hundred less important Canadian ports.

All the way along the Hudson, from Troy to Fort Edward, the contractors have been working with the Hudson, thrusting their coffer-dams here and there, turning in concrete by the tens of thousands of cubic yards, building dikes, scraping channels. The work in the upper Hudson is typical of the engineers who have planned the new canal system of the State of New York.

The old, timid policy of paralleling natural rivers by man's slender, hand-made streams has come to an end. The old-time engineer feared the swollen floods of winter and spring. He had good reason for such fears. But the modern engineer, with greater resources and broader experience, knows that he can control floods even greater than the records of long years show.

So it is that he has sought to make the Mohawk, winding its way through high hills east for a hundred miles into the Hudson, a navigable stream and a portion of the main barge canal. It is already fast becoming an upper Hudson. In some places, where the new works have been already completed, it is nearly a mile wide and from forty to fifty feet in depth.

The Mohawk is not inferior in beauty to that larger river to which it is so important a tributary. And it is highly probable that once its navigable possibilities have been realized it will become as popular with excursion steamers as its parent stream.

THE GIANT'S STAIRCASE AT WATERFORD

To see the beginning of the engineering work upon the main stem of the barge canal, begin at Waterford. Lock No. 1, which steps the artificial stream out of the Hudson there, is a mighty structure of concrete, which makes folk who have been down to the Isthmus rub their eyes and wonder if they are once again at Panama.

And, if you have not been to Panama,

just step to the edge of the north wall of the lock. Beside it are three masonry locks of yesterday, by which the traffic of the old Champlain Canal reached the water-level of the top of the first of the barge canal locks.

There are five of these large locks which bring the canal from the level of the Hudson to that of the lower reaches of the Mohawk. In a dry and sloping pasture back of the dull little Hudson River town the engineers have swept what they call the Waterford Flight, a mighty sequence of concrete blocks, seemingly designed for the footsteps of a giant.

Together these locks lift navigation one hundred and eighty-four feet, which is fourteen feet more than the combined lockage of the entire Panama Canal—an altitude which took the old Erie Canal some sixteen tedious locks and a devious path around the city of Cohoes to accomplish.

At the head of the last lock, a short stretch of artificial ditch—"land canal" is what the engineers call it—and then, the new Mohawk. To make a rough, shallow stream, showing the bared teeth of its rocky bottom at dry seasons of the year, into a navigable river became the work of great dams.

The first of these is known as Crescent, five miles up from the mouth of the Mohawk. Crescent Dam is, of itself, a sizable structure. Suiting its name, it bends in a gentle turn for nearly two thousand feet. It is a solid construction of concrete thirty-nine feet high and built in sections.

Five of these sections have been left open until the State is ready to settle some litigation entailed by the proposed flooding of the old river shores.

Last spring, when the Mohawk was in one of its flood tantrums, the engineers had full chance to see the river at its worst. It poured through the five open sections and over the crests of the finished ones, too. But the engineers only laughed at the river.

THE OLD TOW-PATH IS SUBMERGED

The structure at Crescent holds back the waters until the next dam, at Vischer's Ferry, is reached, ten miles farther up the stream. Vischer's Ferry Dam, of similar proportion to the one at Crescent, cost about half a million dollars. It is completed, with the great permanent lock at the right that lets to the lower level of the

river, and the emergency structure of concrete at the left that connects with the straggling section of old canal that still leads into the Hudson at Troy.

Above the dam the old canal has already disappeared. Its tow-path is a dozen feet under the surface of the splendid new river that the genius of man is developing across the face of the Empire State. Two stout tugs convoy the old wooden barges in groups to the entrance of another section of the old canal which still remains, well past Schenectady.

When the engineers have finished their work there will be no "land canal" between Crescent and Little Falls, and only a short section around the rapids in that narrow *impasse* of the Mohawk. The deepened river, maintained by a continuing series of dams all the way to Utica, will supplant, and in many cases submerge, the Erie ditch that De Witt Clinton and his associates built almost a century ago. These dams can be seen from the through railroad trains, each attached to the lower edge of some stout highway bridge, and they are well worth a moment of attention.

For these are movable dams, great barriers of steel girder and plate, and so hinged upon the bridge structures that in the winter-time, when navigation has ceased for the season, they may be raised clear of the stream so that it may make its ice and flood course with little damage. There are eight of them, and a faint idea may be formed of their size when it is known that the one at Amsterdam, fairly typical of the others, with its three great sections, each two hundred and fifty feet in length, cost eight hundred thousand dollars. The New York State barge canal is no trifling enterprise.

THE HIGHEST LOCK IN THE WORLD

One comes to believe that when he steps off the train at Little Falls and sees the work that the engineers have accomplished in that narrow gorge. Two busy railroads, a rushing river, a canal upon which navigation has had to be maintained until the completion of the new waterway, all must find elbow-room in a narrow cleft between the hills.

To bring three-thousand-ton vessels down through that gorge was a trick well worth the attention of the best of engineers. The other highways must be uninterrupted; there were mills crowding themselves in

the narrow place; the vast mass of rock to be cut was igneous in character and of unusual hardness. The problem was not easy.

Yet the engineers have solved it. In the gorge at Little Falls there stands to-day the highest lift lock in the world. It is a tremendous structure of concrete, and in eight minutes it will take a three-hundred-foot vessel and raise it forty-two and a half feet as easily as a man picks a package up from the floor.

Near Rome the new canal leaves the watershed of the Mohawk, crosses a slight summit, and enters the broad expanse of Oneida Lake, which in turn drains through the Oswego River into Lake Ontario. The crossing by "land canal" into Oneida Lake is hardly more than twenty-five miles, an even-cut ditch at least twelve feet in depth and one hundred feet wide. There is very little of the "land canal" east of the Oswego River, and right there rests a most interesting, and at first somewhat inexplicable feature of the planning of the barge canal.

A CANAL THAT PARALLELS A LAKE

Take out your atlas. Turn to the map of the State of New York. Let your eye follow the natural waterway up the Hudson and the Mohawk from the sea, two hundred and fifty miles inland, to Utica. Scale that short twenty-five miles overland to the deep waters of Oneida and the easy path to the first of the Great Lakes, at the ancient port of Oswego.

"A natural path for a canal," you say, almost at first glance. Of course it is. The engineers of the United States have said so time and time again.

From Ontario the deep-water Welland Canal stretches into Erie and the busy chain of upper lakes. And if there is sentimental and patriotic objection to the use of a British waterway, it would not be a bad matter to dig an American canal around Niagara.

But the politicians who planned the barge canal did not see it that way. They designed an artificial and expensive ditch from the Oswego River west to Buffalo, crossing the natural waterways at right angles, and almost within sight of a splendidly navigable lake.

It would have been quite as feasible and as logical to have designed and built a canal paralleling Lake Erie from Buffalo

on to Cleveland or Toledo or Detroit—to Duluth for that matter—as it was to carry it a single mile west of the Oswego River.

"Then why was it done?" you ask.

Perhaps you never have seen Oswego, the decaying little harbor upon lonely Ontario. There were men in Oswego who saw the opportunity which once had passed. These men quoted the opinions of the Federal engineers, who had once chosen Oswego as the west terminal of the old Erie Canal project.

But Oswego, cankered with decay, could not combat with Buffalo, the west terminal of the old Erie Canal. Buffalo did not purpose to lose her prestige easily, not even if it did cost the State of New York an extra sixty or seventy millions to parallel a navigable lake. She brought political pressure to bear—with telling effect. To Oswego she said in effect:

"If you go in to get the terminal of the main canal, you will get left, get nothing. But if you will join with us, how would you like a million or a million and a half for the improvement of Oswego harbor?"

You do not have to draw pictures of a million dollars for a hungry town of thirty thousand. Oswego compromised; and the canal was built, paralleling Lake Ontario for one hundred and twenty-five miles. Ontario remains the lonely lake, for even the most optimistic of canal advocates hardly imagines that the Oswego Canal will throb with water traffic.

THE CANAL CUTS NAVIGABLE RIVERS

This article, however, concerns the engineering features of the new canal. Come back to your atlas once again. Trace upon it the path of the new waterway, leaving the Oswego River a little way below the outlet of Oneida Lake and making its way across the marshy wastes of the famous Montezuma swamp and there rejoining the alinement of the present Erie Canal.

So does the new waterway sweep far to the north of Syracuse. But the navigation requirements of that city are to be met by the improvement of Onondaga Lake and the construction of a dock terminal system at the end of it upon which Syracuse abuts.

The present canal also intersects Rochester, to the exquisite inconvenience of the folk who live upon the west side of that brisk community. The new barge canal will sweep around the town, a matter of hard cutting for several miles through solid

rock, when following the exact location of the present Erie from the west boundary of Rochester all the way through to Tonawanda.

Indeed, the western portion of the barge canal—the needless portion which parallels Lake Ontario—is practically complete today. It is an artificial waterway, crossing almost all of the natural waterways at right angles. When these are considerable streams, such as the Genesee, for instance, the problem presented is one of real dimensions and involves the building of great dams and other heavy engineering work.

But the most difficult engineering problems of the west end of the new canal—problems approximating in importance those that were met and solved at Little Falls and in the vicinity of Waterford—were met at Lockport.

The men who came from afar to see the old Erie Canal in the day when it was reckoned one of the engineering marvels of the world, opened their eyes wide when they came to the place where navigation cut through a mountain ridge and literally went up-stairs—five great stairs rising from a bowl in the edge of the ridge to the level of the table-land atop of it. The climb they accomplished was fifty feet, and the ridge represented the declivity over which Niagara pours—a goodly portion of the difference in level between Lakes Erie and Ontario.

AND SO, A DOUBLE LOCK

At Little Falls you will remember there was a single lock of forty-four feet, the highest in the world. It was at first suggested that a single lock of fifty-foot lift be built at Lockport. The engineers did not quail at that. They tinkered with their pencils for a while and then gave the exact figures of its cost.

But on second thought it was decided that a double lock would handle the traffic more expeditiously—a boat could be passing through each lock at the same time—and so the double lock, each part with a lift of twenty-five feet, was built in the narrow ravine where formerly ran the five south locks of the old canal and a rushing raceway. The old north locks still remain, until such time as it shall be found necessary to parallel the double lock of the new water highway.

The raceway has gone. Every foot of the space it occupied was needed for the

wider locks of the new canal, and the necessity that originally brought it into being was met with a giant tunnel sixteen feet in diameter, down which pours a mighty flood.

The new canal, like the old, does not rise higher than the level of the waters of Erie at any point. That huge lake, and the other lakes back of it, form a mighty water supply for the new canal. No wonder that the waters that rush through the unseen concrete bore are many-muscle.

"Power!" is the first exclamation at the turbulence of the tail-race of that smooth bore. "How much is there of it? What are they going to do with it?"

WHO WILL BENEFIT BY IT?

In answer to the first question. Yes, there is the power generated by ten thousand gallons a second dropping fifty feet, a volume of water equal to that of the new Catskill aqueduct.

The second question is not as easily answered. Some of the power is being purchased from the State by local industry; some more will propel the near-by lock-gates; the rest may yet go for the electrical driving of the heavy barges through the new canal, although all that is still a matter of conjecture.

But it is power—and no misuse of the word. The engineer in charge of that end of the canal work takes you to the upper end of the locks.

The huge gates that guard the entrances to the basins are tremendous sheaves of steel plate and girder, and if you are fond of statistics you may as well know that each of these gates weighs eighty thousand pounds. Yet there is a double set of them at the upper entrance of the uppermost lock as a guard against extreme emergency, and, as if these were not enough to quiet the fears of the engineers, at Pendleton, a few miles above Lockport, are lift-gates of steel that serve no other purpose than to guard the great locks.

"Oh, I know," you nod, for you have heard the engineers say that there are no other locks or gates between you and the Niagara River, "they have to guard against the great pressure of the upper lakes."

Your theory is right, even though your knowledge of water engineering may be faulty. The emergency gates at Pendleton do serve as a final guard in case the locks at Lockport should be swept out; they

serve to prevent the barge canal usurping the functions of the Niagara River and trying to drain Erie and the upper lakes.

That is an emergency hardly likely to be realized. The locks are built for hard service. They are mighty, although by the ingenious rigging of the electric motors they can be operated by the hand of a child. The hard toil of the gossipy old fellows who used to man the hand-worked timber-gates of the locks on the old Erie is almost ended. The barge canal can come none too quickly to suit them. They are ready to quit.

Six miles above Lockport the "land canal" comes to a final end, almost abruptly, as it monopolizes a broad and lazy creek turned roundabout and by man made to run in just the opposite direction from nature's plan. The creek leads to the twin Tonawandas with their great lumber-yards and the navigable part of the upper Niagara River. Within an hour's sail are Buffalo, Lake Erie, and the great barge canal terminals which the engineers are already beginning to construct.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE CANAL?

As an engineering work, this second to the Panama Canal is immense. The work has been prosecuted faithfully and honestly. The fundamental mistakes in location are not to be charged against the men who have planned the canal in detail and who have built it. They have done their work well. The result is apparent to any one who will make more than a cursory examination of the new waterway.

But the barge canal finished, who is there to predict the place it will take in the economic structure not only of the State but of the nation?

We have already spoken of the slowly disappearing fleet of old-time canal-boats, of the extinction of the mules and horses that used to traverse the weary tow-path miles of the old Erie. In their place must come larger craft, steam or electric propelled, of far greater tonnage; even if they do not at once realize the maximum of three thousand tons which the clearance dimensions of the locks permits.

These vessels have not yet been begun, no naval architect has, as yet, set forth even to design them. But that they must come no one with the least particle of imagination or patriotism really doubts.

The State of New York, having wrought her splendid new waterway, has only solved half her problem. The other half—the problem of the actual use of the new canal—begins to confront her the more urgently. The canal can hardly be of greatest economic value to the State until the question of who its users are to be has been answered, and answered satisfactorily.

These users have not come forward as yet. And when they do come forward they may not be the men for whom the State has cared to build a highway at the cost of \$128,000,000. It is a problem which, in its solution, is going to demand a high order of intelligence, something far and away above local politics, something that may be best described as patriotism—plus common sense.

THE DEEPER MOOD

OUT in the glory of the early morn,
 Wrapped in the magic of the day, new born,
 I walk with heart attuned to waking earth,
 My spirit leaps to welcome joy and mirth.
 I see reflected in the glistening dew
 The Crystal's promise of each dream come true.
 Then kindles in my heart the world-old fire,
 And all my body calls for earth's desires.

But lo, at night, within the shaded wood,
 Like silver shadows—dawns my deeper mood.
 The birds, asleep, no praising anthems sing,
 The steady stars their silent message bring—
 The shining day with rousing calls to life,
 Seems dim and far—with all its human strife.
 Then echoes of my restless wishes cease.
 My soul content, rests calm with God—and peace.

Wanda May

CONDOLENCES FOR CYNTHIA

BY MARGARET BUSBEE SHIPP

AUTHOR OF "RECIPROCITY," "FATHER AND SON," ETC.

"I'M so blue, Cousin Kate, that I want to have my funeral celebrated to-day to cheer me up. You know if I were dead you would send gorgeous flowers, and you, too, Cousin Bob. Think of the wonderful wreath you sent Mr. Cowan just because he was in the bank with you, and only last week you called him an old skinflint. You didn't even like him, and you do like me. Why, if gardenias went to him, I feel sure lilies of the valley and orchids would come to me! And I'm starving for flowers *now*, to-day, this very minute—and I won't care for heaps and heaps when I'm dead. Let's compromise on half as many as you would send if I had met with a fatal accident and we'll call it perfectly square forever, and your liability will cease."

Cousin Bob chuckled good-humoredly and Cousin Kate was comfortably scandalized.

"My dear child, you sound horribly callous, joking about your own funeral and reminding Bob of what he said of Mr. Cowan before his—er—taking off. Certainly you may have all the flowers you wish, but this is a ghastly way to ask for them, Cynthia."

"It's the only way I could do it decently, Cousin Kate, don't you see?" the girl pleaded. "There is absolutely no reason for the family to send me flowers all at once unless I am dead or ill. And I want a lot of them; I want to feel drowned in color and intoxicated in perfume just as I feel in the garden at home. Oh, spring in a city—especially a hideous, strutting little city like this—is a travesty, a mockery!"

"It was singing in the choir at Mr. Cowan's funeral this morning which gave me the idea. Nobody liked him while he was alive, yet to-day there was 'a lavish wealth of floral offerings.' Maybe if he

had been given them when he was alive (perhaps not exactly the flowers, but the kind thought and the sympathy translated into some sort of tangible expression of interest) he wouldn't have been an old skinflint at all. Then I began to think of what lovely flowers each of you would send if I were dead, or even having an operation for appendicitis, until the tears trickled down my nose, and I made up my mind to come straight here and ask you to please not wait. You know you like to be ahead of time, Cousin Kate; it seems so competent. Don't think I'm crazy; I'm just homesick. Good-by."

Cynthia fled from the room, and Cousin Bob looked after her kindly.

"What a child she is! The tears were pretty close to the surface. I'm glad to humor her whim; should have sent her posies long ago if I had known she wanted them. With that bumptious independence of hers she has let us do hardly anything for her since she came here to live. What was it she said I should be sure to send?"

He picked up the desk-telephone, called up a florist, and ordered lilies of the valley and orchids to be sent to Miss Cynthia Rutledge with his card.

"Hold the line a moment. Shall I order yours, too, Kate?"

His sister nodded assent.

"Roses," she decided, "though it would serve the little goose right if I presented her with an anchor of camellias and tuberose."

"Four dozen roses," he directed. "What's that, eh? Killarney? Very well, they will do. Same address, with Mrs. Richard Lawrence's card."

"Who is it?" asked Jane Lawrence softly, coming into the room at that moment with her brother Dick behind her.

"Cynthia," replied her mother absently.

"Oh, no!" cried the girl in a shocked

voice. "And she looked so well and pretty only last Sunday. Uncle Robert, please order something for me—snowdrops, if he has them, great quantities of them, with jonquils. I've heard her say how she loved spring flowers. Oh, *poor* little Cynthia! When did it hap—"

"For Heaven's sake, Jane, hush!" interrupted her mother sharply. "Cynthia isn't dead. It's just an idiotic game of hers."

Mrs. Lawrence explained it, and Dick heartily seconded the plan.

"I think it's a ripping idea. I'll order your collection, Jane, and something on my own account. Violets would be the correct thing. What a funny girl she is! I'm not very keen on relations, you know, but Cynthia is really a corker. It's plucky in her to earn her own living singing in choirs and giving music lessons, so that the money at home may go to the youngsters' education. I think she deserves a most diverting funeral."

By the time Cynthia had reached her boarding-place she was ashamed of the mood of unrest which had made her ask for sympathy and she called up Cousin Bob.

"I'm so sorry I whined. Please forget it and don't pay any attention to anything I said."

"Too late," he chuckled. "Our expressions of condolence are already wending their mournful way."

Cynthia had no lessons to give that afternoon and she was glad to stay indoors, as the day was dull and gray. She started guiltily when the florist's wagon stopped at the house and four large boxes were brought in. Then she forgot everything else in the sheer joy of opening the boxes and reveling in their fragrant contents.

She buried her nose intimately in the pink roses, she kissed the snowdrops and lilies-of-the-valley, because the walks at home were bordered with them; she put the orchids in her prettiest vase and apologized to the mauve aristocrats that it was not dainty enough; she arranged the jonquils in bowls, Japanese fashion, keeping every flower apart as if growing; and the great bunch of violets was pinned on her gray frock. She was "playing" with herself and having as happy a time as in her doll-house days.

After everything was arranged to her liking in the bit of a room which served

as her sitting-room, and she had gone out to throw away the litter of paper and boxes, the bell rang and the maid admitted a visitor for Miss Rutledge.

He was tall and lean, with the slight stoop of the scholar, and from behind his glasses friendly brown eyes looked out absently, but kindly, upon the world. They quickened now with an expression of amazement as he was ushered into Cynthia's room and saw it so brave with flowers. A queer sense of irritation sprang up from unsuspected depths of his being. Had they recognized her so quickly, then, in the city? Was that delicate, childish charm of hers a thing to be known by the many? It seemed to him a subtle gift which would be prized only by the few. This room might belong to the latest popular star. It was astonishing, it was even disconcerting.

He turned at an exclamation of pleasure as Cynthia came into the room.

"Why, Dr. Holbrook! What brings you to this place?"

"A forestry convention," he answered. She was struck by an odd, dubious note in his voice, as if he himself was not altogether sure.

"If I were a professor of forestry, I should never take this time of the year to talk about conservation in dirty, grimy cities. I should not be able to spare one moment from the woods themselves."

"Conventions are disappointing affairs," he admitted somewhat wearily. "The same group of us are here—the same academic group—while the farmers we wish to reach take no interest in it."

"They are too busy at home cutting down trees and clearing out timber," she said sympathetically.

"I wish they might hear you tell how you first learned the meaning of protection, when you saw the fire from the broom-straw gradually licking its way toward a young, long-leaf pine. It has been a vivid picture to me ever since—that thirteen-year-old girl fighting the fire all alone, beating it back with her coat, and finally saving her little tree."

"It sounds very pretty as you tell it," she laughed. "You've left out the two holes burned in the back of the coat I had to wear the rest of the winter, and the scoldings I deservedly had. Tell me what reports you've had of the barren areas that were being reforested with long-leaf pine."

"I won't. I'm going to have a vacation from trees this afternoon."

"Then you'll talk good roads," she returned with resignation. "If you aren't eloquently begging the woodman to spare that tree, you're hammering for good roads."

Her voice boomed in a clever mimicry of Holbrook's bass:

"The sand-clay road solves the problem for this section; it is equal to ordinary macadam, cheaper to construct, and cheaper to maintain—for a good road must be a good road three hundred and sixty-five days in the year!"

"You are as impertinent as ever." His relish in the fact was unmistakable. "But I'm going to talk about flowers this time. Is it a birthday?" He indicated the many vases.

Her dimple struggled with her decorum, and won. It may be said that Cynthia giggled daintily.

"It's—it's a funeral," she explained, and at the look of soberness which overspread Holbrook's face, she added hastily, "*mine*."

This did not simplify matters, so she went on in hurried elucidation.

"I was perfectly starved for flowers; I never knew before what it meant to go through spring without flowers and color and fragrance. I was ungrateful for the many kindnesses of my generous, warm-hearted cousins here, who are always giving me something I don't want. At Christmas Cousin Kate gave me the most imposing umbrella with an inlaid handle—"

"And you never use an umbrella at all. When it rains you put on a slicker and that piquant little cap," he interrupted.

She looked up in surprise that he should recall so trifling a detail about her inconspicuous self.

"Cousin Bob takes me to 'musical' comedies, falsely so called; and dear, sweet Jane gives me elaborate boudoir-caps when I'm out and giving a music lesson by half past eight every morning; and Dick, who is a trump, sends me shelves of best-sellers which gobble up time from the books I'm yearning to read. They're always wanting to do something for me, so I asked them to send my funeral flowers to-day that I might enjoy them myself. I was homesick for mother and the garden," she ended shamefacedly.

She thought Dr. Holbrook would be

laughing at her, but nothing seemed farther from his thoughts.

"I suppose each one sent what seemed to express you best," he speculated. "Jonquills—that's the joy in you, the irrepressible sauciness, the spring-time. And those pink roses are your girlhood, dewy and rosy and unfolding, and the snowdrops explain you in their name. Why orchids?" he questioned, frowning. "I don't find you in any flower that is not fragrant. Is it Joubert who believes 'the odors of flowers are their souls'? But I should not have chosen any of these."

He was regarding her abstractedly, as if thinking aloud.

"Where is the telephone?"

"In the back hall," she replied. She thought he was sending a message to the convention hall, and when he reentered the room she said, "I told you that you couldn't keep out of the tree-tops for long."

"You were mistaken for once. I was telephoning to the nearest florist, and I quite alarmed him by my demands for urgency. It happened that I miss the flower which I instantly connected with you. Perhaps it is because it is finely durable, it is conqueringly hardy, and yet it is pure and sweet and delicately lovely. Which of these is your own favorite?"

"None," she confessed, "though it sounds ungracious and though I care for them all. When grandmother married in 1861 there was just an hour before her soldier-lover had to march away. As they walked across the churchyard together he broke off an armful of white lilacs for her and she held them while the minister read the service. When mother was married she carried white lilacs, too, and so they are associated in my mind with those I love most dearly." She broke off suddenly. "I'm talking a lot about myself. Tell me of everything that's happening at the university. I had such a good time there last summer. I do hope I can go back to the summer-school this year."

"You nearly worked yourself to death, taking all those lectures on harmony and expression and my prosy forestry talks on the side. It has ruined my teaching," he went on gruffly. "If you can imagine what it means to look at a row of listless faces or respectful student faces, and then to have your eyes fall on one avid little face like yours—listening with all your heart as well as your mind, and from sheer love of

it! Not because you've a living to make out of it or a certain course of study that requires it, but as you explained that first day, 'I love trees so much that I can't tell whether I care most for them in their strong, bare bones or with their graceful green frocks on. But I have only a climber's acquaintance; I want to be introduced to them in formal terms.'

Again the girl's gray eyes widened in surprise. It was inexplicable that this dignified, imperturbable professor, absorbed in his profession of forestry and his hobby of good roads, could quote a trivial speech of hers after all these months. She beat back a foolish, glad thought which winged its way to her brain, as she had stifled many thoughts of Holbrook through the lonely winter.

A double ring at the door attracted his attention.

"It must be the flowers. May I see?"

Cynthia heard the messenger's emphatic thanks and surmised a lavish tip for his promptness.

"You look solemn, Herr Professor," she laughed, as he came in with a huge box.

His eyes were serious and his voice earnest as he replied:

"It is the gravest moment of my life, Cynthia."

With hands that trembled in spite of herself she opened the box. She gave a quick, involuntary breath as a familiar perfume was wafted about them like a blessing, and she saw the billowy masses of white lilacs.

"You see, I had ordered them *before* I dreamed that they would be—your bridal flowers."

He caught her hand in both his own and held it closely.

"Do you think me just a fossil of a forester, Cynthia? Is there any hope that

some day you will carry *my* lilacs through the churchyard?"

"But—but—" she stammered. "I didn't know that you cared anything on earth about me."

"Neither did I," he echoed happily, still incredulous of the wonderful thing which had overtaken him. "I thought when I missed you every day in the classes it was because I missed your enthusiasm. I—why, I even spoke to young Davison about it, and I recall that he—er—grinned. You see, he recognized it, but I am so much older I did not understand myself. Why, Cynthia, I honestly believed I was coming up here to the forestry convention, though every bit of the way I was thinking that I had your address and that I should see you soon." His voice was growing in confidence, in masterfulness.

"It was seeing all the flowers and the sudden savage fear that somebody else had won my girl which made me understand like a flash of light that you were the dearest thing in life to me. Oh, Cynthia, little, dear Cynthia, will you go with me all the way?"

"On good roads or bad," she whispered. Her voice was audacious, but there was a mist before her eyes.

"If I had realized that I was going to propose to you this afternoon I should have come in fear and trembling, convinced beforehand that I should make a miserable, awkward failure of it. But it's the simplest thing in the world and incredibly delightful."

With an utter disregard of her violets, he had taken the slim figure in his arms. Held a prisoner there, Cynthia asked in her most deferential class-room manner:

"Is it really true about the petrified forest? I no longer believe in a petrified forester."

THE PROMISE

THE scythe of Time cuts keenly, and the hours,
The golden, fragrant hours fall one by one;
The seasons bring their yield of snows and flowers,
And we are wont to cry: "Our life is done!"

Friend, standing on the brink of Things Unknown,
Thy feet laved by that purple, awful Tide,
Remember One that said unto His own:
"Eons await thy soul of joys untried."

Elizabeth May Montague

EDITORIAL

IMMIGRATION AND THE PANAMA CANAL

STUDENTS of the immigration and assimilation problem are hoping for important results from the opening of the Panama Canal. Economists are familiar with the fact that, whereas the interior of the United States, especially the South and West, has most need of the laboring multitudes that are swept to our shores by the tides of immigration, a very few metropolitan and industrial centers get the most of the incoming army.

Yet West and South are constantly crying out for labor which the Eastern cities get but do not need. Some of the specialists in this problem foresee that with a little proper organization it may be possible, with the canal open, to direct a large part of the immigration to Western cities, and later to Southern, whence the newcomers may be distributed to plantations, ranches, and farms that have immediate need for them.

The possible results, if such a thing can be brought about, must appeal strongly to the imagination. Congestion is the problem of the cities; lack of labor is the problem of the West. The Pacific coast country, Canada, Mexico, the intermountain region, can absorb the immigrant hordes for many decades to come. Why should they not have the chance?

A proper distribution of the immigrants would serve several excellent purposes. It would relieve the pressure for subsistence, which results from having too many appetites in the cities demanding food, while too few workers in the country are providing it. It would develop the regions that need development. It would make farmers to occupy areas now awaiting tillage. It would do away with the tendency to demoralizing social and political conditions which are inevitable under present circumstances. The problem is one to which government attention might well be directed, with vigorous methods of redistribution.

THINGS LAWS CANNOT ACCOMPLISH

UPON reading the tariff laws of Canada and the United States one might conclude that the two countries were trade rivals, anxious to do as little business with each other as possible. Each has a tariff to keep out the other's goods; Canada adds to that a preferential system designed to advantage England in her markets. Still further, Canada rejected a reciprocity proposal coming from this country. So there is a pretty satisfactory showing—on paper—that Canada and the United States don't want to do business together.

What, then, are they doing? Canada, with about seven million inhabitants, has a foreign commerce of a billion dollars a year, and more than half of it is with the United States. In 1912 Canada bought over \$400,000,000 worth of goods from us, and sold \$138,000,000 worth to us. Our sales to Canada increased by twenty-five per cent, and our purchases from her by

NOTE—All editorials in this department were written before the end of September.

twenty-two per cent, in a single year. Only one other country—Great Britain—is now as large a purchaser in our markets.

It is not hard to see why. Canada is, physically, our neighbor. It is separated from us by a line mostly imaginary. Its farmers plow the same kind of imperial acres that ours do, on the same magnificent scale; so they need the same kind of plows, harrows, harvesters, thrashers. Nobody else except us makes that sort. It follows that Canada must buy them from us. Canada produces the things we are accustomed to consume and equipped to manufacture; so we buy from Canada.

People love and hate, and are indifferent toward each other; but without propinquity there would be little matrimony—or commerce. Canada and the United States are fated to be sisters because they are in the same North American household. Laws and treaties and regulations will not keep them from trading together.

"OH, THAT MINE ENEMY WOULD WRITE!"

MINE enemy's books, when mine enemy gets into politics, have ever been rich pickings. It's hard to write a whole book without at least intimating an idea or two, albeit some authors are very skilful in concealment and attenuation. The author who boldly assumes to have ideas, and rudely undertakes to impress them, without regard to their possible political bearings, is in the way of much explaining if later he gets into politics or office.

Still, the writers get along reasonably well, considering. What with histories, essays, judicial opinions, and other literary products, our three latest Presidents have had a good deal to answer for after they got into large politics. The acid and the microscope were put on their output, and much hullabaloo was kicked up about the resultant discoveries, real or alleged; but the community didn't take the revelations seriously, and all three gentlemen were handily elected.

Lately the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations has made it a rule to examine the writings, if any, of diplomatic appointees before confirming them, just to make sure they have not set down anything offensive. It seems a waste of energy. The thing a man wrote ten years ago may appear trivial or foolish to-day; but if that were to be a reason for officially discouraging literature, this would presently become a mighty old-fashioned world.

The man who writes a serious book is likely to be something of a student, and surely his willingness and ability to study should not bar him from public service. It ought rather to recommend him.

A VERY HUMAN PHENOMENON

"BIG TIM" SULLIVAN, boss of the lower East Side in New York, dead at the age of fifty-one, never used liquor nor tobacco. So he will not serve to illustrate the type of political boss and bad man commonly accepted as indigenous to such an environment. He seems to have been a bad man in spite of his goodness, and a good man, in many very human ways, despite his badness.

He was truly the friend of his people. They recognized him as genuinely representative. They rather vaguely sensed the "government" as an institu-

tion far removed from them, which placed policemen on beats to interfere with their convenience. "Big Tim" was their agent in that he connected them with the higher-up powers of government, and possessed an occult power to influence the patrolman and the magistrate in favor of the unfortunate who needed another chance.

They did not understand that his power was merely their power; that he was able to help them because they were both able and willing to help him—at election time. "Big Tim" was the agent of the East Side in precisely the same way that a good many men in more dignified public relation are the agents of their backers and supporters. The Senator for whom a seat is bought, and who in that seat acts in behalf of the buyers, is just as representative as was Sullivan. But Sullivan represented his people on the human side, at least, while the Senator represents a small element of his people on the business side.

"Big Tim" knew his people as human beings, not as atoms in a social scheme; he did for them, legged for them, got them jobs, kept them out of trouble, staked them to the ton of coal or the meal-ticket or the pair of shoes, in the way that one understanding human being does for other understanding human beings. No wonder he was a power!

"Big Tim's" people knew that he was their friend. The public man who in a higher stratum keeps his people just as certain of that fact will succeed just as well. But he will do it, not by the meal-ticket, Christmas-dinner, political-pull route, but by dint of a service that the higher stratum will just as accurately understand when it is rendered.

A DEFIANCE TO DOGMATISM

MAURICE MAETERLINCK and Sir Oliver Lodge have lately published studies of the scientific evidence as to a life beyond the grave. Both approach the subject in scientific fashion; they ask evidence, not faith; and both find that there is substantial evidence that beyond the unknown sea which we call death there is a farther shore, on which the souls of men have landed, and from which they have sent back messages indicating that they have preserved identity and consciousness.

Maeterlinck examines in most interesting fashion the evidence that the subconscious mind of man carries recollection of previous incarnations. If, he argues, in a future state of existence we are to have continuity of personality and memory that will keep us in touch with the facts of the present existence, then why should we not possess, in the present existence, some memory of former states of existence? Investigating the light which the phenomena of mesmerism and hypnotism can shed on this inquiry, he concludes that in fact they do prove that the subconscious mind is a storehouse of recollections of former incarnations.

The Lodge inquiry has more distinctly to do with the future. It looks to the testimony as to whether existence, consciousness, identity, end with the moment of dissolution; and it decides that they do not. Sir Oliver denounces the dogmatism of the materialists who would deny all possibility of continued existence as unscientific and impossible. In a universe in which so very much is admittedly unknown and, with present light, apparently unknowable, why should any group of cynics set themselves up as qualified to give the final answer, and make it an answer that is abhorrent to every instinct and aspiration of the race?

Sir Oliver defies the dogmatists and protests that there is good, sound, worthy testimony, with scientific values, in support of his thesis that death does not end all. Thus far, indeed, the farther shore is but vaguely outlined to our sight; it is treacherous and uncertain; yet men have had glimpses of it sufficient to convince the fair investigator that it deserves scientific and painstaking exploration and mapping.

REFORMING THE SOCIETY DANCE

IN a good many cities, according to the chroniclers of the press, hostesses have made effective their protest against the "tough" dances by refusing to give dancing entertainments. These statements may be true, but for every hostess who has adopted such a course there must have been several new ones to enter the dancing realm, for surely dancing has not in many years been so popular a form of social amusement. It is no longer merely the young people's diversion; they all do it.

That, again, is largely to be accounted for by consideration of the fact that there are no old folks any more. Nothing is so unpopular, so impossible, so preposterous, as to be frankly and avowedly an old lady.

Why should grandma grow old, anyhow? There are no chimney corners in modern houses for her to inhabit. The steam laundries conduct mending divisions which pretend, at least, to perform her darning function. Mince-meat, the concoction of which was once sacred to grandmother's skill and authority, is now made by machinery in car-load lots and sold in sealed jars. *Othello* was a tremendously busy person compared with the occupationless situation of grandma and grandpa; so it seems that the dear old people have joined the dancers, and there's more dancing than ever.

Rag-time may be reviled, but it has 'em all in its train. It has unquestionably brought with it a deal of laxity and some abuse of the privileges of the ballroom floor. The hostesses who are refusing to give dances are not prudes. They have had experiences with conditions that too often arise out of the present-day selfishness of the young men, the unmanageableness of spoiled young women, and the general lowering of conventional standards about such things.

Just now the protest is hardly heard because everybody is dancing mad; but it will make itself heard, and dancing will have to reform itself or be declassified.

REBUILDING THE CITIES

ONE reason why present-day life costs so much is that so many people live in cities, and cities are such modern institutions—that is, modern cities are—that we haven't learned how to perfect their mechanism.

There is quite lately an accumulation of evidence that this fact is beginning to be realized. In cities, too many people stand around waiting on one another. There is too much complexity and not enough efficiency in performing service for the whole population, whether that service be fire insurance, baking bread, selling thread, delivering parcels, or running subways.

We are fairly starting on the big business of rebuilding our cities on economic lines. Chicago has a huge project for consolidating her railroad terminals, thereby saving a lot of money, reducing the number of people necessary

to operate them, and making their service better. Baltimore is doing much the same thing. Philadelphia is engaged in a tremendous project of better transit, improved housing, and more efficient city operation. New York is all the time building itself over, and on the whole doing the thing rather better all the time.

City-planning commissions, housing commissions, playground associations, park boards, efficiency councils, and a score of other instruments are working on the problem of making the city serve its proper function at less cost. That is the real problem. All the way from the village with budding aspirations for a post-office and town hall, up to the metropolis, the same thing is going on.

The villages, for instance, are beginning to learn that if the court-house, the post-office, and the town hall were all in one modern office-building, instead of three different and ill-adapted structures, it would be good for the town and far less expensive. That's a considerable step.

Competition between public utility concerns is being eliminated as fast as possible; only a few years ago it was sought, invited, and regarded as a means to economy. Altogether, we are doing much toward making our cities better investments than they have been.

COMMON SENSE AND COWS

SOME especially cheerful idiot lately has proposed that in order to insure a larger supply of beef, and cheaper prices for steaks and roasts, it should be enacted that no calves may be killed for veal. Not a little commendation has been extended to this idea; as if the government can properly regulate such a thing by law!

It would be just as sane to try to increase the supply of eggs by decreeing that nobody should kill a chicken. Suppose it worked, and the price of eggs came down; the price of poultry would go up correspondingly, and there would probably be more economic loss than gain.

Bossy doesn't get a fair shake in the current discussions of her failure to maintain the national meat supply. In the first place, she is under the necessity of furnishing milk to the increasing population of cities and towns. A cow that is meat cannot also be milk; in fact, a cow that is bred and designed for meat is without much value for milk.

They have recently reported that the country has several millions fewer meat cattle than it had a decade ago. Perhaps so; but the obvious conclusion is really not so obvious as it may seem. Twenty years ago it took about twice as long as it does now to grow a calf into one thousand pounds of beef. A farmer "finishes" his stock quicker nowadays.

Suppose one farmer has sixty steers, and takes four years to prepare them for market; then he supplies fifteen steers a year, doesn't he? Suppose his neighbor has forty, and takes only two years to prepare them for market; then he is contributing twenty steers a year, isn't he? Well, that is exactly what is happening all the time. Hogs and cattle alike are "finished" in shorter time than ever before. The absolute number in the country's live-stock census at a given time may, and in fact does, give no adequate notion of the production of meat animals.

As to a law prohibiting the killing of calves for veal, it would merely prevent calves from coming into the world. The calves from the average dairy herd are not useful or profitable as meat animals; they would better be

killed than raised for beef. The dairy farmer, if forbidden to kill his surplus calves, would have to give them away or go out of business. In a little while it would be impossible to give them away, and he would have to go out of business, anyhow.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MOTION PICTURE

THE time has arrived when the motion picture is being taken more seriously—not by the people, for that happened some years ago, but by the producers themselves. The sad wail of the theatrical manager about the dearth of good plays has been taken up by the motion-picture magnate, and he is puzzling his head over the scenario situation. Where the theaters demanded but hundreds of plays each year, the picture-play public demands thousands, and the quality or strength of the silent dramas presented must improve with the growth of the art.

The time has passed when the producer of motion pictures spent thousands of dollars to stage a twenty-five-dollar play. The public demands something better than this, and now great authors and great actors are as necessary to the picture drama as they ever were to the legitimate stage. This situation has created a demand for picture stories written by authors of recognized ability who made their fame as writers before they entered the scenario field, or by writers whose pens were laid aside long before motion pictures were invented. Producers have dipped into ancient history and the early drama for material. They have dramatized the beautiful stories of the Bible; they have filmed the world's masterpieces of literature; and yet, in the realm of books, millions of gems of literature have scarcely been touched as yet.

The truest friends the producer has discovered are not the bread-and-butter authors who measure their dramas by the yard, but the writers of beautiful song and story who wrote because they loved their work—not for the dollars they received, but for more lasting reward.

ARE PEOPLE BURIED ALIVE?

A UNITED STATES army physician, retired, who was once "drowned" and prepared for burial, but regained consciousness in time to escape the grave, spent years studying the evidences of death, and convinced himself that cases of premature burial are not at all rare. Making investigation here and abroad, he was assured by British undertakers that "if what they personally knew were published it would horrify the world."

The calm admission of personal knowledge of many horrors of this kind verified the convictions of the army man, who in a book on the subject has urged that greater precaution be taken to prevent such tragedies. Especially does he protest against turning bodies over to embalmers before it is certain that life has passed.

He points out that in Germany the utmost care is taken to insure that death, and not suspended animation, has taken place before preparation for burial shall begin. Various shocks to the solar plexus, such as a blow, a fall, a bullet wound, or copious drafts of iced water when one is very tired, overheated, or hungry, may cause a suspension of animation lasting for many hours, even for days. He insists that Americans are peculiarly careless in regard to the precautions that should be taken to insure against the most horrible of all imaginable deaths.

THE SHOP-GIRL AND HER WAGES

CAN SHE LIVE IN DECENT COMFORT ON THE PAY SHE RECEIVES?—ACTUAL FACTS BEARING UPON A MUCH-DISCUSSED QUESTION

BY ANNE O'HAGAN

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM B. KING

THE New York Legislature recently authorized a commission to inquire into the wages of women and children, industrially employed, throughout the State. Two years ago Massachusetts ordered a similar investigation, and as a result of its commission's findings a certain modification of the minimum wage theory is being tested in Massachusetts.

Last spring the proceedings and findings of an Illinois Senatorial vice-investigating commission kept not only that State, but the whole country, on the *qui vive* by its evidence pro and con in the matter of the relations between the working woman's wages and her morals.

East and West, employers heatedly declared that chastity was not a matter of sordid dollars and cents, but of principles, ideals, and training. The majority of working women vehemently corroborated them, and only a pitiful minority shrugged their thin shoulders, smiled with painted lips, and silently dissented. At the suggestion of a minimum wage for women and children, employers variously invoked the Constitution, grieved over the inefficient, whom they would be forced to dismiss to utter poverty in the event of any governmental interference with wages, and recited their ancient creed that woman works for "pin-money."

The findings of the Massachusetts minimum wage commission, of Federal census reporters, of the investigators—the

sleuths, so to speak—of many semipublic, philanthropic, or civic organizations, are all to be found in the sociological archives of libraries. There is page after page in which all working womankind is divided, subdivided, and cross-tabulated into "under sixteen," "sixteen and seventeen," "eighteen to twenty," "twenty to twenty-five," "over twenty-five," "native-born," "foreign-born," "married," "single," "widow," "male wage-earner in family," "no male wage-earner in family," "at home," "adrift."

It is, of course, from the completeness of such reports as these, from the carefully digested mass of accurate, unsentimental evidence, that trustworthy conclusions are to be drawn and wholesome changes recommended. Yet personal experiences are likely to be typical; and the story of a few selected individuals may furnish valuable data to the mind which cannot build a collection of figures into a personality, or infuse a tabulation with the breath of life.

Let us take the case of Nellie M., one of the thirty odd thousand women employed in the large department-stores in the retail district of New York City.

THE STORY OF A NEW YORK SHOP-GIRL

When Nellie began her career as a wage-earner, she was seventeen; which means that she had been subject to home and school influences for a beneficently longer period than many of her associates,

and also that she had not been obliged to submit her strength, during her young girlhood, to the undue strain of long standing, nerve-racking competition in salesmanship, and vitiated air. She still lived at home with her father, her mother, and an older, wage-earning brother.

She was ideal material from the store-manager's point of view—young, rather pretty, tastefully dressed, modestly mannered, and, above all, living at home in a family of male wage-earners. The employer's sacred tradition that a woman works chiefly for a little personal spending money was not threatened by her employment.

As she applied for work shortly before Christmas, she was taken on as an extra despite her lack of experience. Her wages were to be three dollars a week, plus a commission of five per cent on sales. She was assigned to the toy department, and was received good-naturedly by the older girls, who supplemented the instruction given by the firm to green hands in the matter of making out sales-checks and the like.

One of the older women, a gray-haired employee of some years' standing, warned Nellie to be distant in her attitude toward a certain floor-walker, to let her yea be a yea, her nay nay, and her conversation with him no more extended than was strictly necessary. The gossip of the department soon showed her the value of the warning.

This store did not keep open in the evening, even during the Christmas rush, but the necessity of putting away stock in an orderly manner at night, and of arranging it in the morning before opening-time, made a working day of from 7.40 A.M. until about 6.20 P.M. Three-quarters of an hour was allowed for luncheon.

THE STORE LUNCH-ROOM AND REST-ROOM

A lunch-room was maintained by the firm, and the food was supposed to be supplied at cost. Nellie found, however, that the prices charged were no less than those in cheap markets and restaurants, and that the quality of the viands was poor. Apples were from two to five cents each, oranges four and five cents, coffee and tea of a washy sort three cents a cup.

Furthermore, the meat was usually stewed or hashed, and Nellie was too suspicious of its origin, and too fastidious as

to its present condition, to eat it. There were not enough knives and forks to supply the demand of the lunchers, and even those were not washed between services, but merely wiped off. Glimpses of the kitchen where the food was prepared were not conducive to appetite.

The lunch-room was also the rest-room for the women employees. It contained several cots, on which there generally sprawled girls in various stages of exhaustion from bouts with Christmas shoppers, from the sharp reprimands of floor-walkers, from colds, headaches, and what not, the inevitable result of nervous work in overheated, underaired rooms. The rest-room talk of the girls was various—of their health, their pains, their grievances against department heads and store management, their vindictive hatred of customers, whom they regarded more antagonistically than they did their employers; their "fellows," and the parties at which they met these alleviations of their existence.

For the first week Nellie's chief consciousness was of her feet. They seemed to her to grow large, to become heavy, burning weights, shot through with agonizing pains almost as sharp as toothache. Her back, too, grew to ache "awfully" from the strain of long hours of standing and from unaccustomed exertion in lifting.

There were behind her counter the seats required by law, but wo to the girl caught sitting on them! Seated saleswomen mean, to the sensitive eye of store management, saleswomen unalert, trade inactive, goods uninviting. The girls in almost all large retail stores are required to be on their feet all the time, in order to give their department the air of briskness which, the management believes, attracts business and promotes prosperity.

At night Nellie would go out of the building, jammed with shoppers up to the last minute, hot, gaseous, noisy, nerve-racking, and would hang precariously to a strap in a crowded car until she reached her home. There she found awaiting her treatment which she says literally saved her life during her introduction to the industrial world—a hot bath, a cup of hot soup or milk, and an hour's rest, until she was able to eat her supper. Then she crawled to bed, to be awakened at six o'clock the next morning.

Her home conditions could not have been



NELLIE WAS WARNED TO BE
DISTANT IN HER ATTITUDE
TOWARD A CERTAIN
FLOOR-WALKER

better. Tenderness and intelligence were always ready to do their very best for her. Even so, she was expending all her energies each day in a manner that allowed her no strength for mental improvement, for social relaxation, or even for making or mending her clothes—a task which her mother undertook.

IN A FIFTH AVENUE STORE

When her brother married and moved to another borough with his wife, Nellie's earnings became of greater moment to the household. Unable to obtain larger wages in the store where she had begun, and where she had been retained after the Christmas rush, she sought employment in another well-known department-store. Here she received five dollars a week.

The store building was modern and very sanitary. The employees' cloak-rooms, rest-rooms, toilet-rooms were all admirable. There was an employees' benefit association, to which the members contributed each week a small percentage of their wages, and from which they were entitled

to receive certain sums in case of sickness or death. Membership in the association was compulsory, and was more or less the subject of cynical jest among the employees; for the store management was the custodian of the fees, and the woman changing her job to another store forfeited not only her rights in the association, but the money which she had contributed to it.

This store carried a very high grade of goods, and was famous for the beauty of many of its importations. The saleswomen, often possessed of native taste, had it developed, accentuated, by the luxuriousness and loveliness of the fabrics and articles in which they dealt. The store catered, perhaps, to the fashionable, or, at any rate, to the largest-spending class, rather than to the ordinary rank and file of the community.

Like all prosperous stores, it numbered among its customers many of the *demi-monde*, whose histories were familiar to the saleswomen. The combination here presented of insidious examples in the persons of many patrons, and of insidious

temptation in the goods in which the shop so largely dealt, was, so Nellie averred, a more potent cause of immorality among its force than was the incomplete dovetailing between wages and the cost of living. That many of its saleswomen were subsidized by private illicit relations was an accepted belief, not only throughout its staff, but also among the customers. It is the testimony of certain patrons of the store, as well as of Nellie, that one of the department heads—a capable, good-looking, extremely well-dressed, and rather expensively jeweled woman—spoke frequently of the riding-horse which she kept at one of the Park riding-academies.

The death of Nellie's father and mother, the one following the other closely, transferred the young woman from the ranks of those listed in the tables as "under twenty, unmarried, at home, male wage-earner in family"—those perennial joys of the employer—to the ranks of those listed as "adrift." In the New York shops these are in the minority; out of the thirty odd thousand women and girls employed throughout the shopping district it is estimated that only about ten per cent are entirely self-dependent and adrift. Of these the large majority are more than twenty years of age.

By this time Nellie was more or less inured to the physical hardships of her life. Her feet had obligingly adjusted themselves to their duty of supporting her body in a vertical position ten hours a day, her arms and back had accommodated themselves to the strain of constant raising and lowering of goods, her lungs had become accustomed to a deoxidized air. She had learned to do as her fellow workers did in the matter of "sneaking" from the floor whenever occasion required, without applying to the floor-walker for a floor pass—something grudgingly given and sometimes refused; she could go without water almost as long as a camel, even in dog-days; she could keep her temper and her nerves in dealing with the most rasping of shoppers. She had not counted her lot a very hard one as long as her parents lived and she shared their home.

Cast "adrift," Nellie united with two other girls in the store who were likewise traitors to the ancient tradition that young women worked for "a little pin-money" while their parents supplied them with the necessities of life. She shared with them

a furnished room, for which each paid a dollar a week. It contained a double bed and a cot, a small closet, the division of which frequently strained friendly relations, a chiffonier, and a combination wash-stand.

HOW THREE SHOP-GIRLS LIVED

The room was on the third floor, and was unheated. The girls had no parlor in which to entertain their men friends, which was an especial hardship to Nellie, accustomed as she was to the tiny parlor of her father's five-room flat. They cooked their own breakfasts and suppers, paying a little less than two dollars a week apiece for their provisions. Their midday meals were fairly hearty, and were purchased in a restaurant near the store for fifteen cents each.

They were not so ill-nourished as might appear to the reader concerned about the rise in the price of porterhouse steaks and the difficulty of getting really fresh eggs for even sixty cents a dozen. Their breakfasts and suppers were substantial but somewhat monotonous, and included an old-fashioned cooked cereal with cocoa or milk.

The common sense of this dietary was due chiefly to Nellie, who—a most important point in the consideration of the shop-girl's possibilities—had been trained in a decent and intelligent home long enough to know something of food values. Sometimes, of course, youthful appetite conquered common sense, and the girls bought cream-puffs, or sausages, or something "tasty"—at the risk of paying the price of their indulgence in indigestion or faintness.

Room rent, one dollar a week; breakfasts and suppers, about one dollar ninety-five; lunches, about a dollar—three dollars and ninety-five cents gone out of a wage which began at five dollars, and which in the course of two years was advanced to six dollars. That left, at first, about a dollar for car-fare, clothes, doctors, dentists, and amusements; and, later, approximately two dollars for all these things!

THE COST OF A SHOP-GIRL'S CLOTHING

In connection with the expenditure necessary for clothing for store employees, the budgets obtained by the Massachusetts minimum wage commission are extremely interesting and illuminating. Stock-girls

and saleswomen were examined as to the clothing necessary for them in the stores. Their estimates were for the black uniform almost universally prescribed for winter wear in the shops, the white waists and black skirts required for summer wear, the shoes, belts, and collars needed for a neat appearance at work. Underclothes, hat, and extra garments for street and home wear were not considered. The cost ran from thirty dollars and eighty cents for a little stock-girl's working outfit, to seventy-eight dollars and twenty cents for that of a saleswoman in the ladies' costume department.

Dress estimates kept by members of St. George's Working Girls' Club in New York, published in the Consumers' League reports, show that the cost of clothing amounts to about sixty-five dollars a year, as follows:

Shoes, two pairs.....	\$4.00
Mending, ditto.....	1.50
Two hats.....	5.00
Stockings, eight pairs.....	1.00
Two combination suits.....	1.00
Four shirts.....	1.00
One flannel petticoat.....	.25
Two white petticoats.....	1.50
Five shirt-waists.....	6.00
One net waist.....	2.50
Two corsets.....	2.00
Gloves.....	2.00
Rubbers, two pairs.....	1.30
Twelve handkerchiefs.....	.60
Three nightgowns.....	1.50
One sweater.....	2.00
Two suits.....	30.00
Sundries.....	2.00
Total.....	\$65.15

It is not wonderful, all things considered, that Nellie M., earning at best six dollars a week, spending for actual necessities at least five dollars and a quarter, and facing the unknown risks of the future with a weekly margin of seventy-five cents, should have married, somewhat against her own better judgment, and with some misgivings, a carpenter friend of her brother's. Nothing more serious was urged against him than that he drank and was violent when drunk.

At any rate, she escaped, as probably two-thirds of her associates do, with health, vitality, child-bearing and child-rearing attributes lowered, but with virtue unimpaired, by the familiar path of matrimony from the dangers and hardships of the saleswoman's lot. With her future as

the wife of a man in a more or less seasonal trade, given to sprees and to violence, and as the mother of his children, this article has no concern.

ANOTHER TYPE OF THE SHOP-GIRL

Yetta was of another sort. If you ever shop in the basement leather department of a certain big store, it may be Yetta who will wait upon you. Yetta is, of course, over sixteen. That she does not look it is not her employer's business.

She is of the unconquerable Jewish race; its tough, wiry physical strength is in her stunted body; its brilliant intelligence, its tireless ambition are in her dark eyes. And as Yetta talks to you about the "realness" of the walrus valise at which you are looking, there is a vibrant quality in her voice which denotes interest in the valise and in you and in the art of salesmanship. Yetta, who scarcely reaches your shoulder if you are a full-grown woman, and whom it somewhat worries you to see lifting the big, heavy leather bags, is a real personality.

She would also be classified as "adrift." She came from Russia a few years ago with what remained of her family after a massacre. She was put to work in a factory, but when what was left of her family died, she decided to change her occupation.

There was more money to be made in the factory, to be sure, while one worked; but the work was seasonal, and during the busy seasons the hours were too long to permit attendance at a night-school. So Yetta, with a somewhat uncertain supply of English but a masterly intelligence, became a "cash" when she was still so young at heart, despite her working-papers, that she used to kiss and fondle the dolls which she carried to the wrappers.

However, that was a weakness which did not interfere with her utilization of any opportunity for advancement and improvement both within and without the store. She attended the class which the establishment maintained for an hour in the morning for "cashes," and she made due note of the fact that promotion in the store was partly dependent on proficiency in studies. She submitted herself to the doctor who visited the store twice a week to give the employees free treatment, sometimes even playing the hypochondriac a little in order to avail herself of the privilege. She took hygienic advice from a



THE THREE GIRLS COOKED THEIR OWN BREAKFASTS AND SUPPERS

trained nurse who was employed by the store all the time. She joined the clubs and benefit associations. She spent her week's vacation at the summer home maintained by the establishment. For Yetta's firm believes, apparently with sincerity and whole-heartedness, in a policy of almost paternal interest in its employees, and is the traditional hard-hearted employer only in the matter of wages.

And how does she live on her five dollars and fifty cents a week?

LIFE AT A WORKING GIRLS' HOME

She stoutly and believingly maintains that it is a sum which places her beyond the fear of want. She pays two dollars and fifty cents a week for board and lodging in a home maintained for working girls partly by private benevolence, and thirty cents a week extra for lunches—a glass of milk and a roll in the store lunch-room. The two dollars and fifty cents pays for a cell-like compartment, "all to herself," containing a narrow iron bed, a combination wash-stand, a chair, and a

grated locker closet; together with two fairly nourishing meals a day.

The room is separated by seven-foot partitions from the cubicles adjoining. These dormitories occupy the second and third story front of an excellent modern building, and behind them on each floor is a big hall with tables, chairs, and lights where the girls may sit and read or sew and talk until the lights are extinguished at ten o'clock. Three nights in the week there are classes in dressmaking, millinery, stenography, and typewriting. Sometimes there is a lecture or an entertainment in the assembly-room; once a month there is a dance. The indefatigable Yetta takes advantage of as many of these opportunities as her attendance at night-school will allow.

In the basement of the building are laundries where the girls may wash and iron their clothes. Occasionally Yetta stops in her determined pursuit of an education to do her laundry-work. She walks home from the store so that her car-fare costs her only thirty cents a week. She



IF YOU EVER SHOP IN THE LEATHER DEPARTMENT, IT MAY BE YETTA WHO WILL WAIT UPON YOU

reserves a dollar a week for her wardrobe—she says that it pays to be stylish—and the remainder she saves.

Already, during her unbelievably industrious years in this country, she has saved a hundred dollars. She dallies with the thought of matrimony, but thinks that on the whole she would prefer to study and become a "lady doctor." She anticipates no obstacle in her path; and indeed it seems almost as if the very laws of nature might respect her unquenchable valor, and never exact from her the penalty for her years of unremitting toil and scanty nourishment!

Yetta is a proud little person, and it would be a needless cruelty to insist upon the fact that the two dollars and fifty cents which supplies her with a clean lodging and most of her food is the price of a compromise between charity and self-respect. She does not realize that private benevolence makes up the difference between what she pays and what it actually costs to give her what she obtains. But that is a fact which it is no cruelty to mention to Yetta's employer, and to the community at large, which in one way or another makes up the deficits of these semiphilanthropic homes.

Of such institutions as these, some more elaborate, some less so, there are in the neighborhood of thirty in New York, accommodating between fifteen hundred and eighteen hundred working girls. It has been mentioned that there are something over three thousand de-

partment-store employees alone "adrift" in New York; and the department-stores supply a smaller proportion of self-dependent women living alone than any other of the industrial occupations in which women are engaged. So that it will not suffice to content oneself with the reflection that there are "plenty of places where the girls can live cheaply if they have no homes." There are not half enough for this one class of department-store employees.

SHOP-GIRLS WHO RISE TO GOOD POSITIONS

Of course, Nellie and Yetta do not exhaust the types of the department-store

women employees adrift in New York. There are exceptional women who have somehow managed to achieve success—women who are heads of departments, even buyers, women who command extremely good salaries and are able to maintain themselves in comfort and self-respect. Very few of them have been recruited, however, from the ranks of those who were adrift at an early age.

Certain proprietors mention proudly that they have in their employ women who have risen to be buyers, having begun as cash-girls; but investigation generally shows those cash-girls to have had homes of more or less comfort, where their physical strength was maintained by proper care in their early years. Even at best, there are not a great many women buyers in the New York department-stores; and some of them have come from smaller cities where, perhaps, they have had some family connection with a shop.

Still less do Nellie and Yetta represent the other class of those who go down to ruin, physical or moral—those whose constitutions succumb to the strain of work, to the lack of wholesome housing and food, and who thus enter the lists of those dependent upon charity in the form of hospital or dispensary service, or out-and-out alms; and those, the more spectacular, the more advertised, the more lurid, whose moral degradation is the price they pay for a fair degree of physical well-being.

After all, despite the prominence given to this unfortunate type of shop-girl in the wage discussions that have raged lately, thorough investigation seems likely to bear out the employers in their assertion that immorality among their employees is infrequent, almost negligible.

Under the direction of the Federal Commissioner of Labor, Mary Conyngton has prepared a report on the relation between occupation and criminality among women. Sex immorality as well as other kinds—intoxication, disorderly conduct, theft, etc.—was considered. As far as her investigation has gone—though not all cities have yet been studied—domestic and personal service furnish seventy-seven per cent of the female criminals, although they furnish only forty per cent of all the women wage-earners! As for the girls employed in stores and offices—those unprotected young women upon whom so much sympathy, so much advice, and so many mis-

givings have been expended—only two per cent of the total female delinquency was charged against them.

FAIR PLAY FOR THE SHOP-GIRL

But even if a more extensive investigation corroborates these proportions, the comfortable citizens and the comfortable mercantile employers need take no solace to themselves from the showing. For the young girl, the young woman, a decent living wage is not merely a sum which enables her to keep life in her body, a roof of some sort over her head, clothes of some sort upon her back, and her person inviolate. Almost as much of a necessity to the young woman as bread itself is pleasure.

To very few does pleasure come wearing the strenuous guise that it wears to little Yetta; to very few of the young does achievement seem synonymous with amusement. For the greater part—probably for ninety-nine per cent, at least—of the young, pleasure means light, music, animation, dancing, beaux. And what provision for any of these things does a wage make which does not provide for decent housing, for decent privacy, for nourishing food?

How many moving-picture shows a week could Yetta attend, if she took her relaxation, like most of her companions, in that form? To how many dances could Nellie have gone in the days before she tried to escape her problem by marrying her carpenter? The answer is obvious—to none at all, except by cutting off an absolute necessity—a lunch, a pair of gloves, a cake of soap, a bottle of medicine.

The only hope of amusement which the poorly paid young store-employee has rests in the young men of her acquaintance, or, if she is not squeamish, in the young men whom she may "pick up." Cheap amusements, public dance-halls, excursion-boats, moving-picture shows, are conducted apparently in the interest of the powers that prey upon young girls. Drink is sold in the former, and the doors of the last are the lounging-places of corrupt men ready to invite the eager little shop and factory girls within—but at a price.

That any investigation should reveal these thousands of young girls and women so unharmed only increases the marvel one feels at their innate goodness and heroism—qualities which they wear without the least apparent consciousness of their greatness.

THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BY BRANDER MATTHEWS

PROFESSOR OF DRAMATIC LITERATURE IN COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY

Recent Books on "Americanisms" and "Africanderisms" which Suggest Some Interesting Reflections on the Life and Growth of Our Language.



THERE are not a few timorous and voluble persons who enjoy rushing into print to proclaim their fervid belief that our noble mother tongue is in imminent danger of contamination, degradation, and decadence. When one of these prophets of evil happens to be of British birth, he is likely to assert that the English language is in deadly peril of being Americanized, than which no worse fate could possibly befall it. When he chances to be a native of these States, he is likely to express his dread of the evil results of our assimilation of countless foreigners who cannot be expected to acquire the niceties of our idiom, and who indeed cannot fail to mangle our vocabulary and to muddle our syntax.

Within the past few months two portly books have been published in which these uneasy souls might hope to find justification for their worst fears. One of these is in two solid volumes of more than five hundred pages each—"An American Glossary, Being an Attempt to Illustrate Certain Americanisms upon Historical Principles," by Richard H. Thornton. The other is "Africanderisms, a Glossary of South

African Colloquial Words and Phrases and of Place and Other Names," by the Rev. Charles Pettman.

Each of these vocabularies represents indefatigable industry; each of them contains an abundance of material for the special student of the expansion of our language; and each of them, again, has interesting suggestions for the general reader.

Mr. Pettman's work is the most elaborate attempt yet made to catalogue the accretions of English due to the inclusion of Dutch South Africa within the wide-flung borders of the British Empire. He shows us how certain Kafir words have been taken into habitual use by the white men of South Africa, and also how certain English words have been adopted by the Kafirs, such as *Baibele* for "Bible" and *kabitshi* for "cabbage." But the Africanderisms derived from native dialects, as well as from Portuguese, German, and French, are only a few, whereas the borrowings from the Hollanders are a great many. In fact, there are Dutch words which have come into English through two very different doors, first of all from the port

EDITOR'S NOTE—Previous articles in this series of talks upon current literary topics, by Brander Matthews, have been as follows: "Who's Who in Fiction" (published in *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE* for March), "Books on the Drama" (April), "Modern Essays" (May), "A String of Short Stories" (June), "Concerning Cook-Books" (July), "American Character in American Fiction" (August), "American Biography" (September), and "Plays to Read" (October).

of New Amsterdam and two hundred years later from the Cape of Good Hope. The most familiar example of this double acquisition is "boss," which Mr. Pettman spells "baas." Yet only a little less familiar is "stoop," which Mr. Pettman spells "stoep."

WORDS BORROWED FROM THE DUTCH

We New Yorkers are so accustomed to the unlovely brownstone high-stoop houses of half a century ago that we are a little surprised to discover that this use of "stoop" is wholly unknown to our British cousins, and that our kin across the sea therefore fail to find anything funny in the remark of the American girl in Paris who told her father that she had seen him "standing on the stoop of the Madeleine." From New Amsterdam, the little town on the toe of Manhattan, "stoop"—both the word and the flight of steps it describes—spread all over the United States. And with the diffusion of the word came also the extension of a custom which Mr. Pettman records as existing also in South Africa:

These stoeps are the favorite resort in the cool of the evening.

It is amusing to note certain of the parallelisms between American usage and South African. "Staat," for example, means not the body politic, as "state" does in Great Britain, but a subdivision of territory exactly equivalent to the American use of "State." Where we had depreciated "greenbacks," the South Africans had "bluebacks." Where we call a light, white cake "angel food," they give the name of "angel's food" to a specific fruit-salad. Where we picturesquely characterize bad whisky as "tanglefoot," from its results, they call bad gin "square-face;" from the shape of its bottle. Where we speak of Virginia as the "Old Dominion," they call Cape Colony the "Old Colony." Where we object to impertinent "back-talk," they refuse to listen to "back-chat."

Mr. Pettman credits to us Americans the use of "store" as meaning a "shop"; but, oddly enough, he thinks "storekeeper" an original Africanderism. The South Africans have also taken over a host of other Americanisms—"store-clothes," for example, "salt-lick," "sunup," "tailings," "stock-farm," "boom," "off color." Sometimes Mr. Pettman fails to recognize the American

origin of the terms he catalogues, as in the case of phrases like "that's too thin," and "it's up to you." Another term which he records as indigenous to South Africa, "a touch of the tar-brush"—to indicate a minimum admixture of negro blood—may have originated in our Southern States. I know that it was not uncommon in Louisiana before the Civil War; but, on the other hand, it may have been used even earlier in the West Indies.

If one may judge from the ample bibliography prefixed to "Africanderisms," Mr. Pettman is a pioneer in his effort to catalogue the words and phrases which have been accepted into the speech of the South African, whereas Mr. Thornton has had half a dozen predecessors in the task of recording the words and phrases differentiating the usage which obtains in the United States from the usage which obtains in Great Britain. Like all his predecessors, Mr. Thornton is inclined to be a little too inclusive—that is to say, he credits to us terms not in any way really characteristic of American speech-customs. But it must be said that Mr. Thornton errs in this direction less often than any of the earlier collectors of Americanisms, and also that he is frank in his frequent notes drawing attention to the British employment of the term in question.

What separates Mr. Thornton's glossary from all previous dictionaries of Americanisms is not only his superior caution and carefulness, and his constant use of the great Oxford Dictionary and of the various vocabularies of the British dialects—what distinguishes Mr. Thornton's book and gives it its indisputable superiority over its predecessors is its method of arrangement. The editor is sparing of definition and prolific in illustration; and he always arranges his illustrative quotations in strict chronological order, so that the reader can see at once when the term first got itself into print.

JEFFERSON AS A LINGUISTIC PIONEER

Items of interest are to be gleaned here and there in turning the pages of Mr. Thornton's two volumes. It is, for instance, with a little surprise that we discover that Thomas Jefferson was seemingly the first man to employ the verb "belittle" and to use the noun "bread-stuffs." And it is with equal surprise that we note Mr. Thornton's ignorance of the

fact that the whitehall boat, sometimes termed a "whitehaller," had its origin here in New York City. But what is most surprising is the omission of many more recent American creations, especially such expressive compound words as "fool-proof," "scare-head," "head-liner," and "loan-shark."

Mr. Thornton omits "sky-scraper," as well as the "housesmith" who makes its erection feasible. Correlative to "sky-scraper" is another word also omitted, "taxpayer," used to describe an abnormally low building designed to earn the annual assessment until the time is ripe to "improve" the property with a sky-scraper, an abnormally high building. "Improve," in this sense, is also an Americanism, as Mr. Thornton makes plain. In fact, when we speak of "a piece of unimproved land" we are using a term the meaning of which is obscure to the untraveled Briton.

On the title-page of this American glossary Mr. Thornton quotes a striking prophecy made by Thomas Jefferson in a letter written exactly a hundred years ago:

The new circumstances under which we are placed call for new words, new phrases, and for the transfer of old words to new objects. An American dialect will therefore be formed.

Even if this prophecy has not been fulfilled to the letter, and even if American English has not yet sharply separated itself from British English, there are indisputable differences worthy of record and of study. We ought not to laugh at the worthy Englishwoman who chanced to read an American bill of fare on which she noted "Baked Indian Pudding," whereupon she asked in accents of horror:

"Can such a thing be possible in a civilized community?"

THE NEED FOR A BOOK OF BRITICISMS

Our kin across the sea say "as the crow flies" to indicate the shortest distance between two points; and we say a "bee-line" or an "air-line." I recall my hesitancy and wonder when I read in a London paper about some happening "on the Georgia Aerial Railway." But after due cogitation I came to the conclusion that this was a British misinterpretation of the Georgia Air-Line Road, the rewrite man having made an unhappy guess as to what "air-line" might be.

On the other hand, any American wom-

an glancing down the column of "Situations Wanted" in any London newspaper would be equally puzzled by advertisements headed "Cook - General." Every American woman knows what a surgeon-general is and an attorney-general; but what is a cook-general? Does this unfamiliar compound serve to indicate a supreme *chef* in charge of subordinate culinary artists? Now this is just what it does not mean, since it signifies a cook who is willing also to do general housework.

In Baedeker's invaluable guide to the United States there is, very properly, a list of American terms likely to be unfamiliar to British tourists. Oddly enough, Baedeker's guides to London and to England have not yet been provided with an equally necessary list of British terms likely to be unfamiliar to American travelers. How, otherwise, is an American wandering in Great Britain to learn that if he wishes to telephone a friend in another town he must ask not for "long distance" but for "trunks"? How is he otherwise to be informed as to his rights when he reads on the bill of fare that "a follow of any dish will be served without extra charge"—"follow" here meaning "second helping"? How is he to interpret the unexpected label "excessed" which he will find pasted on his baggage after he has paid the supplementary fee for his possession of a greater weight of luggage than the railroad is willing to convey for nothing?

In spite of the fact that the divergencies of vocabulary between the speech of Great Britain and the speech of the United States are not very numerous or very important, there would be advantage in having a dictionary of Briticisms to stand on the shelves of the library by the side of our dictionaries of Americanisms; and it is to be hoped that some American student of language may be moved to undertake this labor of love.

Sometimes the British word is emphatically simpler than the American, as in "lift" for "elevator"; and sometimes the American term is as obviously superior to the British, as in "farm-hand" for "agricultural laborer." Where we say that a manuscript has been "typewritten," they say that it has been "typed"; and here again they have the advantage of the briefer and better form—an advantage which they do not possess when they employ the cumbersome word "educationalist" instead of "educator." And how came it about that

when we exported the now disappearing art of the negro minstrel, they refused to accept our name for the boisterous "end-men," strangely preferring to call them "corner-men"?

THE FRESHNESS OF AMERICAN PHRASES

It may be that I am prejudiced by my own nationality, but as I turned the pages of these two glossaries, one of Americanisms and the other of Africanderisms, I could not help remarking upon the greater freshness, sharpness, and picturesqueness of the indigenous American phrases over those which have sprung up in South Africa. In many Americanisms there is an imaginative quality, such as we find in the sturdy English of the Elizabethans. The Africanders seem not to possess this power of verbal spontaneous generation, this ability to create offhand expressive terms, clear in outline and rich in color.

Very few of the Africanderisms collected by Mr. Pettman linger in the memory as apt and energetic. The immense majority of them seem tame and insipid; and this is what no impartial observer would dare to say about our linguistic inventions. I do not recall in all Mr. Pettman's pages a single Africanderism as happy as one unexpected use of a noun as a verb recorded by Colonel Roosevelt in his delightful autobiography. In his ranching days he had joined two of his men in felling trees; and he chanced to overhear one of these men giving the record of their day's work.

"Bill cut down fifty-three; I cut forty-nine; and the boss, he *beavered* down seventeen."

Colonel Roosevelt's comment is that "those who have seen the stump of a tree which had been gnawed down by a beaver will understand the exact force of the comparison."

ENGLISH IS A LIVING LANGUAGE

The timorous and voluble persons who are shrilly vocal in deploring the decadence of our language shrink with horror from impromptu expressions like "beavered down," unwarranted by precedent; and they disdain and abhor Americanisms and Africanderisms alike. They deny the right of private judgment in word-making, and they call for the promulgation of a rigid linguistic code, with severe penalties for all who infringe its regulations. They are sincere in believing that it is unsafe to

leave a language in control of the people who speak it. They want to have a guardian appointed for it; they desire to have it put into the charge of a protective committee; and they would be willing to sacrifice their private affairs to serve on this committee for the public good, having no doubt whatever as to their own fitness for the appointment.

Professor Lounsbury has discussed the singular delusion that prevails among these timorous and voluble persons—that they are acquainted with all the words that belong to the language, or, at any rate, with all that belong to it properly. It is the equal assumption of every one of them "that words or phrases strange to him, or for any reason objectionable to him, by that fact proved that they had no business whatever in the speech; at all events, it proved their non-existence in that pure and perfect diction of which he himself was an authorized exponent."

In other words, these timorous and voluble persons are firmly convinced that what they do not happen to know is not to be regarded as knowledge. They conscientiously set up their personal equation as universal law.

Now the real danger to a language is from these self-sufficient purists and not from the people as a whole, however ignorant and however careless the main body may be. If the purists had their way, if they succeeded in imposing their strait-jackets on the language, its energy would be fettered; English would lose its imaginative freedom, its capacity for expression, its ability to renew its youth. It would come in time to have the orderly regularity which the grammarians think they recognize in a dead language; and then indeed it would be a dead language. As English happens to be a living language, very much alive, and with immense reserves of power, the misguided efforts of the purists will fail. Nevertheless, these efforts constitute an ever-present peril, to be combated unceasingly.

CULTURE AND COMMON SENSE

The foremost of French critics, Sainte-Beuve, the most cultivated man of his highly cultivated country, never let his culture control his common sense.

"It is universal suffrage which rules a language," he said, more than half a century ago; "and no dictator has any au-

thority." The authority granted to any writer of a grammar or to any editor of a dictionary is that to which his character, his equipment, and his judgment entitle him, no more and no less. It is his obligation to record usage in vocabulary and in syntax; and he has no further function, except that in cases of disputed usage he may express modestly his own personal preference. The facts of speech are what they are; and it is the duty of the grammarian and of the dictionary-maker to record them. The grammarian may object strongly to the phrase "It is me"; he may think that it is altogether wrong; but if he is honest he is bound to record that this phrase has been in use for centuries by writers and speakers of high repute. The dictionary-maker may be disgusted by absurdities of orthography like pneumonia, knowledge, mnemonic, and gnu; but if he is honest he is bound to record that these are the recognized spellings.

There is a pitiful modesty in the way in which many Americans refer to a dictionary as if it were inspired. While this obeisance to a book is peculiarly American, it is only another aspect of an attitude observable half a century ago in Great Britain, in the deference paid to the prescriptions of the grammar promulgated by Lindley Murray. A like attitude was observable also in France two centuries ago, in the deference accorded to Vaugelas. Probably an immense majority of the Britons who pinned their faith on Lindley Murray would have renounced him had they been aware that he was an American. It is a curious coincidence that Vaugelas, the reformer of French linguistic practise, was not a Frenchman, but a native of Savoy. And it may be noted also that it is an American dictionary, the "Century," which seems to be most often consulted nowadays in Great Britain, its wide-spread sale having been pushed by the *London Times*.

Vaugelas, it is well to remember, was no fanatical purist; his suggestions are curiously modern for a man who wrote under Louis XIII; and his attitude toward the vernacular is not unlike that of latter-day scholars, Professor Lounsbury, Professor Jespersen, and Professor George Philip Krapp—who is perhaps the most frankly democratic of the three, and whose volume on "Modern English" takes most advanced ground. Professor Jespersen

thinks that the purists have interfered harmfully with certain inherent and wholesome tendencies of the English language, and that they have encouraged lifeless forms responding to no real need of the peoples who have English for their mother tongue.

MOB RULE NOT TO BE TOLERATED

In holding up to scorn the purists who seek to inhibit the healthy growth of our language I do not mean to suggest that English must needs be left to the negligence of the mob and the rabble. The ideal of ease and of elegance is always "the speech of the people in the mouth of the scholar." But the people are not the mob and the rabble only; the scholars are also among the constituent elements of the people. The educated are as much a part of the people as the uneducated; and we may reject mob rule as stupidly in matters linguistic as in matters political.

The attitude which ought to be taken by the better educated members of the community was indicated recently by a writer in the *London Times*, in a review of Professor Jespersen's stimulating book on "The Growth and Structure of the English Language":

Language is a mighty force, a turbulent stream, flowing from sources beyond our control, toward an ocean of whose further shores we have no knowledge. We cannot shut up the sea with doors or draw out Leviathan with a hook; and it would seem as if the individual must struggle in vain against the great collective will of the community. And yet that collective will is not a blind force; it follows an ideal from afar, and is ultimately governed by a confused sense or speech-feeling of what the language ought to be. More and more the character of this ideal, the soundness of this speech-feeling, depends upon the taste of the educated classes. If their taste be corrupted, the language will suffer; while if they encourage the right fashions, the set of the language will be guided in the right direction. . . . Recognizing in popular speech the soil from which our standard language had its origin, and to which it must return to renew its life, we must look with no unkindly eye on the vivid terms which come to us fresh from the fields, the workshop, and the sea.

In other words, we must be hospitable to useful novelties of speech, whether British, American, or South African, or whether assimilated from some foreign

language living or dead. English is a conquering tongue, continually engaged in rectifying its frontiers and in annexing adjacent territory.

OLD WORDS GO, NEW WORDS COME

It is also continually casting out upon the scrap-heap words outworn and no longer efficient. Only specialists in linguistics suspect the immense number of words which are on the retired list, although they still cumber our larger dictionaries. New terms are constantly needed to replenish the vocabulary and to keep it fit for the use of man in his hour of need.

These new words come from all sorts of sources besides the fields, the workshop, and the sea. Sometimes they are excavated from the past, as Edward Fitzgerald dug up from the East Anglian dialect "the *brabble* of the brook." Sometimes they are suddenly derived from a proper name, as to "boycott," which was first only a Hibernicism, then a Britishism, until its use spread beyond the British Isles and it was accepted by all the peoples who speak English. Sometimes their origin is lost in

doubt, as "booming," which seems to have been at first a Westernism, then an Americanism, until its utility was acknowledged also throughout the British Empire.

And here is one advantage that English has over every other modern tongue. It has spread to all the shores of all the seven seas; and those who dwell on every one of the shores are engaged in enlarging the vocabulary to force it to supply their sudden necessities. In Jefferson's phrase, their several circumstances "call for new words, new phrases, and for the transfer of old words to new objects." A new dialect is not formed, as Jefferson prophesied; but there is made ready for local use a new vocabulary, of which the most salient words and phrases, after lingering for a while as Britishisms or Americanisms, Africanderisms or Australianisms, may win their way finally into universal English use whenever the larger body feels the need of just this word.

These localisms are provincial volunteers admitted at last into the regular army on terms of absolute equality; and by their admission the regular army is not weakened, but strengthened.

NOSTALGIA

Oh, to be rid of your shaven lawns,
And your snug homes in a row,
Of the hedges trim, and the hard, white roads
Where the noisy motors go!
But oh, for the sight of a woodland path
And the smell of the balsam fir,
And the solemn sound of the great gray pines
With their branches all astir!

'Tis weary walking the hard paved streets,
Among the lines of shops,
Where all things are to buy and sell,
And the traffic never stops;
But oh, to stand on a mountain top,
Where the winds of heaven blow,
And feel your spirit stretch its wings
Over the world below!

It's ill to breathe among the crowds
That push their eager way,
And the look in their eyes is keen and hard,
Whether for work or play;
But oh, to lie in the open wold
When the stars are in the sky,
And see the glorious ranks of God
Steadily marching by!

Isabel Francis Bellows

THE LIGHT OF WESTERN STARS*

BY ZANE GREY

AUTHOR OF "RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE," ETC.

XXX

ON the following day Alfred and Florence were married. Florence's sister and several friends from El Cajon were present, besides Madeline, Stillwell, and his men. It was Alfred's express wish that Stewart should attend the ceremony.

Madeline was amused when she noticed the painfully suppressed excitement of the cowboys. For them a wedding must have been an unusual and impressive event. She began to have a better understanding of the nature of it when they cast off restraint and pressed forward to kiss the bride, according to the old-fashioned custom. In all her life Madeline had never seen a bride kissed so much and so heartily, nor one so flushed and disheveled and happy.

The dinner began quietly enough, with the cowboys divided between embarrassment and voracious appetites that they evidently feared to indulge. Wine, however, loosened their tongues, and when Stillwell got up to make the speech everybody seemed to expect of him they greeted him with a roar.

Stillwell was now one huge, mountainous smile. He was so happy that he appeared on the verge of tears. He rambled on ecstatically till he came to raise his glass:

"An' now, girls an' boys, let's all drink to the bride an' groom—to their sincere an' lastin' love—to their happiness an' prosperity—to their good health an' long life. Let's drink to the unitin' of the East with the West. No man full of red blood an' the real breath of life could resist a West-

ern girl an' a good hoss an' God's free hand—that open country out there. So we claim Al Hammond, an' may we be true to him! An', friends, I think it fittin' that we should drink to his sister an' to our hopes. Heah's to the lady we hope to make *our* Majesty! Heah's to the man who'll come ridin' out of the West, a fine, big-hearted man with a fast hoss an' a strong rope, an' may he win an' hold her! Come, friends, drink—"

A heavy pound of horses' hoofs and a yell outside arrested Stillwell's voice and halted his hand in mid air. The *patio* became as silent as an unoccupied room.

Through the open doors and windows of Madeline's chamber burst the sounds of horses stamping to a halt, then harsh speech of men and a low cry of a woman in pain.

Rapid steps crossed the porch, entered Madeline's room. Nels appeared in the doorway. Madeline was surprised to see that he had not been at the dinner-table. She was disturbed at sight of his face.

"Stewart, you're wanted outdoors," called Nels bluntly. "Monty, you slope out here with me. You, Nick, an' Stillwell, I reckon the rest of you hed better shut the doors an' stay inside."

Nels disappeared. Quick as a cat Monty glided out. Madeline heard his soft, swift steps pass from her room into her office. He had left his guns there. Madeline trembled. She saw Stewart get up quietly and, without any change of expression on his dark, sad face, leave the *patio*. Nick Steele followed him.

Stillwell dropped his wine-glass. As it broke, shivering the silence, his huge smile

* This story began in the May number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

vanished. His face set into the old craginess, and the red slowly thickened into black. Stillwell went out and closed the door behind him.

Then there was a blank silence. The enjoyment of the moment had been rudely disrupted. Madeline glanced down the lines of brown faces to see the pleasure fade into the old, familiar hardness.

"What's wrong?" asked Alfred rather stupidly. The change of mood had been too rapid for him. Suddenly he awakened, thoroughly aroused at the interruption. "I'm going to see who's butted in here to spoil our dinner," he said, and strode out.

He returned before any one at the table had spoken or moved, and now the dull red of anger mottled his forehead.

"It's the sheriff of El Cajon!" he exclaimed contemptuously. "Pat Hawe, with some of his tough deputies, come to arrest Gene Stewart! They've got that poor little Mexican girl out there tied on a horse. Confound that sheriff!"

Madeline calmly rose from the table, eluding Florence's entreating hand, and started for the door. The cowboys jumped up. Alfred barred her progress.

"Alfred, I am going out," she said.

"No, I guess not," he replied. "That's no place for you."

"I am going." She looked straight at him.

"Madeline! Why, what is it? You look—dear, there's pretty sure to be trouble outside. Maybe there'll be a fight. You can do nothing. You must not go."

"Perhaps I can prevent trouble," she replied.

As she left the *patio* she was aware that Alfred, with Florence at his side and the cowboys behind, was following her.

When she got out on the porch she heard several men in loud, angry discussion. Then, at sight of Bonita helplessly and cruelly bound upon a horse, pale and disheveled and suffering, Madeline experienced the thrill that sight or mention of this girl always gave her. It yielded to a hot pang in her breast—that live pain which so shamed her. But almost instantly, as a second glance showed agony in Bonita's face, her bruised arms where the rope bit deep into the flesh, her little brown hands stained with blood, Madeline was overcome by pity for the unfortunate girl, and by a woman's righteous passion at such barbarous treatment of one of her own sex.

The man holding the bridle of the horse on which Bonita had been bound was the big-bodied, bullet-headed guerrilla who had found the basket of wine in the spring at camp. Redder of face, blacker of beard, coarser of aspect, evidently under the influence of liquor, he was as fierce-looking as a gorilla, and as repulsive.

Three other men were present, all mounted on weary horses. The one in the foreground—gaunt, sharp-featured, red-eyed, with a pointed beard—she recognized as the sheriff of El Cajon.

Madeline hesitated, then stopped in the middle of the porch. Albert, Florence, and several others followed her out; the rest of the cowboys and guests crowded the windows and doors. Stillwell saw Madeline, and, throwing up his hands, roared to be heard. This quieted the gesticulating, quarreling men.

"Wal now, Pat Hawe, what's drivin' you like a locoed steer on the rampage?" demanded Stillwell.

"Keep in the traces, Bill!" replied Hawe. "You savvy what I come fer. I've been bidin' my time, but I'm ready now. I'm hyar to arrest a criminal."

The huge frame of the old cattleman jerked as if he had been stabbed. His face turned purple.

"What criminal?" he shouted hoarsely.

The sheriff flicked his quirt against his dirty boot and twisted his thin lips into a leer.

"Why, Bill, I knowed you hed a no-good outfit ridin' this range, but I wasn't wise thet you hed more'n one criminal."

"Cut that talk! Which cowboy are you wantin' to arrest?"

Hawe's manner altered.

"Gene Stewart," he replied curtly.

"On what charge?"

"Fer killin' a greaser one night last fall."

"So you're still harpin' on that? Pat, you're on the wrong trail. You can't lay that killin' onto Stewart; but if you insist on bringin' him to court, let the arrest go to-day—we're hevin' some *fiesta* hyar—an' I'll fetch Gene in to El Cajon."

"Nope! I reckon I'll take him when I got the chance, before he slopes."

"I'm givin' you my word," thundered Stillwell.

"I reckon I don't hev to take your word, Bill, or anybody else's."

Stillwell's great bulk quivered with his

rage, yet he made a successful effort to control it.

"See hyar, Pat Hawe, I know what's reasonable. Law is law; but in this country there always has been, an' is now, a safe an' sane way to proceed with the law. Pat, you're not overlikened in these parts; but you're the sheriff, an' I'm respectin' your office. I'm respectin' it this much—if the milk of human decency is so soured in your breast that you can't hev a kind feelin', then try to avoid the onpleasantness that'll result from any contrary move on your part to-day. Do you get that hunch?"

"Stillwell, you're threatenin' an officer," replied Hawe angrily.

"Will you hit the trail quick out of hyar?" queried Stillwell in a strained voice. "I guarantee Stewart's appearance in El Cajon any day you say."

"No! I come to arrest him, an' I'm goin' to."

"So that's your game!" shouted Stillwell. "We-all are glad to get you straight, Pat. Now listen, you cheap, red-eyed coyote of a sheriff! I reckon there's been some dozen or more killin's in the last year. Why don't you take to trailin' some of the others? I'll tell you why. You want to hound Gene Stewart an' put him where he's never been yet—in jail. You want to spite his friends. Wal, go ahead an' try to arrest him!"

Stillwell took one mighty stride off the porch. His last words had been cold. His rage appeared to have been transferred to Hawe. The sheriff had begun to stutter and shake a lanky red hand at the cattleman when Stewart stepped out.

"Here, you fellows, give me a chance to say a word!"

As Stewart appeared the Mexican girl suddenly seemed vitalized out of her stupor. She strained at her bonds, as if to lift her hands beseechingly. A flush animated her haggard face and her dark eyes lighted.

"Señor Gene!" she moaned. "Help me! I so seek. They beat me, rope me, mos' keel me. Oh, help me, Señor Gene!"

"Shut up, er I'll gag you!" said the man who held Bonita's horse.

"Muzzle her, Sneed, if she blabs again!" called Hawe.

Madeline sensed something tense and strained working in the short silence. Was it only a phase of her thrilling excitement? Her swift glance showed the faces of Nels

and Monty and Nick to be brooding, cold, watchful. She wondered why Stewart did not look toward Bonita. He, too, was now dark-faced, cool, quiet, with something ominous about him.

"Hawe, I'll submit to arrest without any fuss," he said slowly, "if you'll take the ropes off that girl."

"Nope!" replied the sheriff. "She got away from me wunst. She's hawg-tied now, an' she'll stay hawg-tied!"

Madeline thought she saw Stewart give a slight start; but an unaccountable dimness came over her eyes, at brief intervals obscuring her keen sight. Vaguely she was conscious of a clogged and beating tumult in her breast.

"All right, let's hurry out of here," said Stewart. "You've made annoyance enough, Hawe. Ride down to the corral with me. I'll get my horse and go along with you."

"Hold on!" yelled Hawe, as Stewart turned away. "Not so fast! Who's doin' this? You don't come no El Capitan stunts on me. You'll ride one of my pack-hosses, an' you'll go in irons!"

"You want to handcuff me?" queried Stewart with a sudden start of passion.

"Want to? Haw, haw! Nope, Stewart, that's jest my way with hoss-thieves, raiders, greasers, murderers, an' sich. See hyar, you Sneed, git off an' put the irons on this man!"

The guerrilla called Sneed slid off his horse and began to fumble in his saddlebags.

"You see, Bill," went on Hawe, "I swore in a new depooty fer this particular job. Sneed is some handy. He rounded up that little Mexican cat fer me."

Stillwell did not hear the sheriff; he was gazing at Stewart in a kind of imploring amaze.

"Gene, you ain't goin' to stand fer them handcuffs?" he pleaded.

"Yes," replied the cowboy. "Bill, old friend, I'm an outsider here. There's no call for Miss Hammond and—and her brother and Florence to be worried further about me. Their happy day has already been spoiled on my account. I want to get out—quick!"

"Wal, you might be too durned considerate of Miss Hammond's sensitive feelin's." There was now no trace of the courteous, kindly old rancher. He looked harder than stone. "How about my

feelin's? I want to know if you're goin' to let this sneakin' coyote put you in irons and hawg-tie you and drive you off to jail?"

"Yes," replied Stewart steadily.

"You, Gene Stewart! What's come over you? Why, man, go in the house, an' I'll 'tend to this feller. Then to-morrow you can ride in an' give yourself up like a gentleman."

"No—I'll go. Thanks, Bill, for the way you and the boys would stick to me. Hurry, Hawe, before my mind—*changes!*"

Stewart's voice broke at the last word, betraying the wonderful control he had kept over his passions. As he ceased speaking he seemed suddenly to become spiritless and dropped his head.

Madeline saw in him then a semblance to the hopeless, shamed Stewart of earlier days. The vague riot in her breast leaped into conscious fury—a woman's passionate repudiation of Stewart's broken spirit.

Once she had entreated him to become her kind of a cowboy—a man in whom reason tempered passion. She had let him see how painful and shocking any violence was to her. And the idea had obsessed him, had grown like a softening lichen upon his will, had shorn him of the wild, bold spirit which she now strangely longed to see him feel.

When the man Sneed came forward jingling the iron fetters Madeline's blood turned to fire. She would have forgiven Stewart then for lapsing into the kind of cowboy it had been her blind and sickly sentiment to abhor. This was a man's West—a man's game! What right had a woman reared in a softer mold to use her beauty and her influence to change a man who was bold and free and strong?

But Stewart held forth his hands to be manacled. Then Madeline heard her own voice burst out in a ringing, imperious command:

"Wait!"

As she stepped to the porch, facing the men, she not only felt anger and pride summoning their forces to her command, but there was something else calling—a deep, passionate, mysterious thing not born of the moment.

XXXI

SNEED dropped the manacles. Stewart's face took on a chalky whiteness. Hawe, in a slow, stupid embarrassment beyond his

control, removed his sombrero in a respect that seemed wrenched from him.

"Mr. Hawe, I can prove to you that Stewart was not concerned in any way whatever with the crime for which you want to arrest him."

The sheriff's stare underwent a blinking change. He coughed, stammered, and tried to speak. Manifestly he had been thrown completely off his balance. Astonishment slowly merged into discomfiture.

"It was absolutely impossible for Stewart to have been connected with that assault," Madeline went on swiftly. "He was with me in the waiting-room of the station at the moment when it happened outside. I assure you I have a distinct and vivid recollection. The door was open. I heard the voices of quarreling men speaking in Spanish. Evidently they had left the dance-hall opposite and were coming toward the station. I heard a woman's voice mingling with the others. It, too, was Spanish, and I could not understand, but the tone was beseeching. Then I heard footsteps on the gravel. I knew Stewart heard them—I could see from his face that something dreadful was about to happen. Then, just outside the door, there were hoarse, furious voices, a scuffle, a muffled shot, a woman's cry, the thud of a falling body, and the quick footsteps of a man running away. Next, the girl Bonita staggered into the door. She was white, trembling, terror-stricken. She recognized Stewart, appealed to him. Stewart supported her and endeavored to calm her. He asked her if Danny Mains had been shot, or if he had done the shooting. The girl said no. She told Stewart that she had danced a little, flirted a little with *vagueros*, and they had quarreled over her. Then Stewart took her outside and put her upon his horse. I saw the girl ride down the street and disappear in the darkness."

While Madeline spoke another change appeared to be working in the man Hawe. His discomfiture wore to a sullen fury and his sharp features fixed in an expression of craft.

"Thet's mighty interestin', Miss Hammond, 'most as interestin' as a story-book," he said. "Now, since you're so obligin' a witness, I'd sure like to put a question or two. What time did you arrive at El Cajon thet night?"

"It was after eleven o'clock," replied Madeline.

"Nobody there to meet you?"

"No."

"The station-agent an' operator both gone?"

"Yes."

"Wal, how soon did this feller Stewart show up?" Hawe continued with a wry smile.

"Very soon after my arrivel. Perhaps fifteen minutes, possibly a little more."

"Some dark an' lonesome around thet station, wasn't it?"

"Indeed, yes."

"An' what time was the greaser shot?" queried Hawe, his little eyes gleaming like coals.

"Probably close to half past one. It was two o'clock when I looked at my watch at Florence Kingsley's house. Directly after Stewart sent Bonita away he took me to Miss Kingsley's. So, allowing for the walk and a few minutes' conversation with her, I can pretty definitely say the shooting took place at about half past one."

Stillwell heaved his big frame a step closer to the sheriff.

"What're you drivin' at?" he roared, his face black again.

"Evidence!" snapped Hawe.

Madeline marveled at this interruption. As Stewart irresistibly drew her glance she saw him gray-faced as ashes, shaking, utterly unnerved.

"I thank you, Miss Hammond," he said huskily, "but you needn't answer any more of Hawe's questions. He's—he's—it's not necessary. I'll go with him now, under arrest. Bonita will corroborate your testimony in court, and that will save me from this—this man's spite."

Madeline, looking at Stewart, seeing a humility which she at first took for cowardice, suddenly divined that it was not fear for himself that made him dread further disclosures, but fear for her—fear lest she might suffer shame through him.

Pat Hawe cocked his head to one side, like a vulture about to strike with his beak, and cunningly eyed Madeline.

"Considered as testimony, what you've said is sure important an' conclusive. But I'm calculatin' thet the court will want to hev explained *why* you stayed from eleven thirty till one thirty in thet waitin'-room alone with Stewart!"

Stewart gave a tigerish start. Stillwell's big hands tore at the neck of his shirt, as if he was choking. Alfred strode hotly for-

ward, to be stopped by the cold and silent Nels. Monty Price emitted a sudden noise which was both a hiss and a roar.

In the rush of her thought Madeline could not interpret the meaning of these things which seemed so strange at the moment; but they were portentous. Even as she was forming a reply to Hawe's speech she felt a chill creep over her.

"Stewart detained me in the waiting-room," she said, clear-voiced as a bell. "But we were not alone—all the time."

For a moment the only sound following her words was a gasp from Stewart. Hawe's face became transformed with a hideous amaze and joy.

"Detained?" he whispered, craning his lean and corded neck. "How's thet?"

"Stewart was drunk. He—"

With a sudden passionate gesture of despair Stewart appealed to her:

"Oh, Miss Hammond! Don't! *Don't!*"

Then he seemed to sink down, his head lowered upon his breast in utter shame. Stillwell's great hand swept to the bowed shoulder and he turned to Madeline.

"Miss Majesty, I reckon you'd be wise to tell all," said the old cattleman gravely. "There ain't one of us who *could* misunderstand any motive or act of yours. Mebbe a stroke of lightnin' might clear this murky air. Whatever Gene Stewart did that onlucky night—you tell it!"

Madeline's dignity and self-possession had been disturbed by Stewart's importunity. She broke into swift, disconnected speech:

"He came into the station—a few minutes after I got there. I asked—to be shown to a hotel. He said there wasn't any that would accommodate married women. He grasped my hand—looked for a wedding-ring. Then I saw he was—he was intoxicated. He told me he would go for a hotel porter; but he came back with a priest. Padre Marcos. The poor priest was—terribly frightened. So was I. Stewart fired his gun at the *padre's* feet. He pushed me into a bench. Again he shot—right before my face. I—I nearly fainted; but I heard him cursing the *padre*—heard the *padre* praying or chanting—I didn't know what. Stewart tried to make me say things in Spanish. All at once he asked my name. I told him. He jerked at my veil. I took it off. Then he threw his gun down and pushed the *padre* out of the door. That was just before the

vaqueros came with Bonita. Padre Marcos must have seen them—must have heard them. After that Stewart grew quickly sober. He was mortified—distressed—stricken with shame. He told me he had been drinking at a wedding—I remember, it was Ed Linton's wedding. Then he explained that the boys were always gambling, and he had wagered he would marry the first girl who came to El Cajon. I happened to be the first one. He tried to force me to marry him. The rest—about the assault on the *vaquero*—I have already told you."

Madeline ended, out of breath and panting, with her hands pressed upon her heaving bosom. The revelation of what she had so long kept secret made her throb and tremble and burn. She thought of Alfred and his wrath; but he stood motionless, as if dazed. Stillwell's attention was centered upon Stewart, who seemed utterly crushed.

Hawe rolled his red eyes and threw back his head.

"Ho! Ho! Ho! Say, Sneed, you didn't miss any of it, did ye? Haw! Haw! Best I ever heerd in all my born days! Ho! Ho!" Then he ceased laughing and, with glinting gaze upon Madeline, insolent and vicious and savage, he began to drawl: "Wal, now, my lady, I reckon your story, if it tallies with Bonita's an' Padre Marcos's, will clear Gene Stewart in the eyes of the court." Here he grew slower, more biting, sharper, and harder of face. "But you needn't expect Pat Hawe or the court to swaller that part of your story *about bein' detained unwillin'!*"

Madeline had not time to grasp the sense of his last words. Stewart had convulsively sprung upward, white as chalk. As he leaped at Hawe, Stillwell interposed his huge bulk and wrapped his arms around the cowboy. There was a brief, whirling, wrestling struggle. Stewart appeared to be besting the old cattleman.

"Help, boys, help!" yelled Stillwell. "I can't hold him! Hurry, or there's goin' to be blood spilled!"

Nick Steele and several others leaped to Stillwell's assistance. Stewart, getting free, tossed one aside and then another. They closed in on him. For an instant a furious, straining wrestle of powerful bodies made rasp and shock and blow. Once Stewart heaved them from him; but they plunged back and finally conquered him.

"Gene! Why, Gene!" panted the old cattleman. "Sure you're locoed to act this way! Cool down! Why, boy, it's all right! Jest stand still—give us a chance to talk to you. It's only ole Bill, you know—your ole pal who's tried to be a daddy to you. He's only wantin' you to hev sense—to be cool—to wait!"

"Let me go! Let me go!" cried Stewart, and the poignancy of that cry pierced Madeline's heart. "Let me go, Bill, if you're my friend! I don't care what Hawe's said or done to me. It was that about *her!* Are you all a lot of greasers? How can you stand it?" Then his voice broke and fell to a whisper. "Bill, dear old Bill, let me go! *I'll kill him!*"

"Gene, I know you'd kill him if you hed an even break," replied Stillwell soothingly; "but you ain't even packin' a gun, an' there's Pat lookin' nasty, with his hand nervous like. He seen you hed no gun. He'd jump at the chance to plug you an' then holler about opposition to the law. Cool down, son! It'll all come right."

Suddenly Madeline was transfixed by a terrible sound. Her startled glance shifted from the anxious group round Stewart to see that Monty Price had leaped off the porch. He crouched, hunched down, with his hands below his hips, where the big guns swung. From his distorted lips there again issued a sound that was combined roar and bellow and Indian war-whoop, and, more than all, a horrible, warning cry. He looked like a hunchback about to leap on his foe like a malicious demon. He was quivering, vibrating. His eyes, black and hot, were fastened with piercing intentness upon Hawe and Sneed.

"Git back Bill, git back!" he roared. "Git 'em back!"

With one lunge Stillwell shoved Stewart and Nick and the other cowboys up on the porch. Then he crowded Madeline and Alfred and Florence to the wall and tried to force them further. Failing to get them through door and windows, he planted his wide person between the women and danger. Madeline grasped his arm, held on, and peered fearfully from behind his broad shoulder.

"You, Hawe! You, Sneed!" called Monty in that same wild voice. "Don't you move a finger er an eyelash!"

Madeline's faculties nerved to keen, thrilling divination. She grasped the relation between Monty's terrible cry and the

strange, hunched posture he had assumed. Stillwell's haste and silence, too, were pregnant of catastrophe.

"Nels, git in this!" yelled Monty, and all the time he never shifted his intent gaze as much as a hair's breadth from Hawe and his deputy. "Nels, chase away them two fellers hangin' back there. Chase 'em, quick!"

These men, the two deputies who had remained in the background with the pack-horses, did not wait for Nels. They spurred their mounts, wheeled, and galloped away.

"Now, Nels, cut the girl loose!" ordered Monty.

Nels ran forward, jerked the halter out of Sneed's hand, and pulled Bonita's horse in close to the porch. As he slit the rope which bound her she fell into his arms.

"Hawe, git down!" went on Monty. "Face front an' stiff!"

The sheriff swung his leg, and, never moving his hands, with his face a deathly, sickening white, he slid to the ground.

"Line up there beside your guerrilla pard! There! You two make a fine pic-toor—a fine team of pizened coyote an' a cross between a wild mule an' a greaser! Now listen!"

Monty made a long pause, in which his breathing was plainly audible. Madeline's eyes were riveted in fascination upon him. Her mind, swift as lightning, had gathered the subtleties in action and word succeeding his domination of the men. Violence, terrible violence—the thing she had sensed, the thing she had feared, the thing she had sought to eliminate from among her cowboys—was, after many months, about to be enacted before her eyes. It had come at last!

She had softened Stillwell, she had influenced Nels, she had changed Stewart; but this black-faced, terrible Monty Price now rose, as it were, out of his wild past, and no power on earth could stay his hand. Madeline did not shudder; she did not wish to blot out from sight this little man, fearful in his mood of wild justice. She suffered a flash of horror to feel that Monty, blind and dead to her authority, cold as steel toward her presence, understood the deeps of a woman's soul. For in this moment of strife, of insult to her, of torture to the man she had uplifted and then broken, the passion of her reached deep toward primitive hate.

With eyes slowly hazing red she watched Monty Price; she listened with thrumming ears; she waited, slowly sagging against Stillwell.

"Hawe, if you an' your dirty pard hev loved the sound of human voice, then listen, an' listen hard!" said Monty. "Fer I've been goin' contrary to my ole style jest to hev a talk with you. You all but got away on your nerve, didn't you? 'Cause why? You roll in here an' flash yer badge, an' talk mean, an' almost bluff away with it. You heerd all about Miss Hammond's cowboy outfit stoppin' drinkin' an' cussin' an' packin' guns. They've took on religion an' decent livin', an' sure they'll be easy to hobble an' drive to jail! Hawe, listen. Ther was a good an' noble woman come out of the East somewheres, an' she brought a lot of sunshine an' happiness an' new idees into the tough lives of cowboys. I reckon it's beyond you to know what she come to mean to them; but wunst they was only a lot of poor cowboys, an' then, sudden like, they was human bein's, livin' in a big world that hed somethin' sweet even fer them—even fer an ole, worn-out, hobble-legged, burned-up cowman like me! An' you, Pat Hawe, you come along, not satisfied with ropin' an' beatin' thet friendless little Bonita, you come along an' face the lady we fellers honor an' love an' reverence, an' you—you—"

With whistling breath, foaming at the mouth, Monty Price hunched lower, his hands at his hips, and edged inch by inch farther out from the porch, closer to Hawe and Sneed.

"Thet's all!" roared Monty. Lower and lower he hunched, a terrible figure of ferocity. "Now, both you armed ossifers of the law, come on! Flash your guns! Throw 'em, an' be quick! Monty Price is done! There'll be daylight through you both before you fan a hammer, but I'm givin' you a chanst to sting me. You holler law, an' my way is the ole law!"

Hoarser and more demoniacal he grew with each panting breath, lower he hunched his shoulders. All his body, except his rigid arms, quivered with a muscular convulsion.

"Dogs! Skunks! Scorpions! Buz-zards! Flash them guns, er I'll flash mine! Aha!"

To Madeline it seemed that the three stiff, crouching men leaped into instant and united action. She saw streaks of fire and

puffs of smoke. Then a crashing volley deafened her.

Smoke veiled the scene. Slowly it drifted away, to disclose three fallen men, one of whom, Monty, leaned on one hand, a smoking gun in the other.

He watched for a movement from the other two. It did not come. Then, with a terrible smile, he slipped back and stretched out.

XXXII

IN the days that followed, whether she was awake or asleep, Madeline Hammond could not release herself from the thralling memory of that tragedy. She was haunted by Monty Price's terrible smile. Only in action could she escape; and to that end she worked, she walked, and rode. Overcoming a strong feeling, which she feared was unreasonable disgust, she waited on Bonita, who lay ill at the ranch, bruised and feverish, in need of skilful nursing.

Madeline felt that something inscrutable was changing her soul. She was never spiritually alone. There was a step on her trail. Indoors she was oppressed. She required the open—the light, the wind, the sight of endless slopes, the sounds of corral and pond and field.

One afternoon she rode down to the alfalfa fields, round them, and back up to the spillway of the lower lake, where a group of mesquit-trees, fed by the water that seeped through the sand, had taken on the bloom and beauty of renewed life. Under these trees there was shade enough to make a pleasant place to linger.

Madeline dismounted, desiring to rest a little. She liked this quiet, lonely spot. It was really the only secluded nook near the house. If she rode down into the valley, or out to the mesa, or up on the foot-hills, she could not go alone. Even now probably Stillwell or Nels knew her whereabouts; but as she was comparatively hidden here, she imagined a solitude that was not actually hers.

Her horse, Majesty, bobbed his head and flung his mane and switched his tail at the flies. He would rather have been cutting the wind down the valley slope.

Madeline sat with her back against a tree and took off her sombrero. The soft breeze, fanning her hot face, blowing strands of her hair, was refreshingly cool. She heard the slow tramp of cattle going in to drink. That sound ceased, and the

grove of mesquits appeared to be lifeless, except for her and her horse.

Yet, listening and looking with keen ears and eyes, she found that the place was far from dead. Desert quail, as gray as the bare earth, were dusting themselves in a shady spot. A bee, swift as light, hummed by. She saw a horned toad, the color of stone, squatting low in the sand. A brown bird darted down from an unseen perch and made a swift, irregular flight after a fluttering insect. Madeline heard the sharp snapping of a merciless beak. There was death, as well as life, in the shade of the mesquits.

Suddenly Majesty shot up his long ears and snorted. Then Madeline heard a slow pad of hoofs. A horse was approaching from the direction of the lake.

Madeline had learned to be wary. Mounting Majesty, she turned him toward the open. A moment later she felt glad of her caution, for, looking back between the trees, she saw Stewart leading a horse into the grove. She would as willingly have met a guerrilla as this cowboy.

Majesty had broken into a trot when a shrill whistle rent the air. The horse leaped, and, wheeling so swiftly that he nearly unseated his rider, he charged back straight for the mesquits. Madeline spoke to him, cried angrily to him, pulled with all her strength upon the bridle, but was helplessly unable to stop him.

He whistled a piercing blast. Madeline realized then that Stewart, his old master, had called him, and that nothing could turn him. She gave up trying and attended to the urgent need of saving herself from mesquit boughs that Majesty thrashed into motion.

The horse thumped into an aisle between the trees, and, stopping before Stewart, whinnied eagerly. Madeline, not knowing what to expect, had no time for any feeling but amazement. A quick glance showed her the cowboy in rough garb, dressed for the trail and leading a wiry horse, saddled and packed.

When Stewart, without looking at her, put his arm around Majesty's neck and laid his face against the flowing mane, Madeline's heart suddenly began to beat with unwonted quickness. Stewart seemed oblivious to her presence. His eyes were closed. His dark face worked into softer mold, lost its hardness and sadness, and for an instant became beautiful.

Madeline instantly divined what his action meant. He was leaving the ranch; this was his good-by to his horse. How strange, sad, fine, was this love between man and beast!

A dimness confused Madeline's eyes; she hurriedly brushed it away, and it came back wet and blurring. She averted her face, ashamed of the tears Stewart might see. She was sorry for him. She fought a mounting wish to take him again into her service. He was going away, and this time, judging from the nature of his farewell to his horse, it was to be forever.

Like a stab from a cold blade, a pain shot through Madeline's heart. But why Stewart's departure?

"I want to talk to you," he said.

Madeline started, turned to him, and now she saw the earlier Stewart, the man who reminded her of their first meeting.

"I want to ask you something," he went on. "I've been wanting to know something. That's why I've hung on here. You never spoke to me, never noticed me, never gave me a chance to ask you; but now I'm going over—over the border, and I want to know. *Why did you discharge me?*"

At his last words that hot shame, tenfold more stifling than before, rushed over Madeline, sending the scarlet in a wave to her temples. It was as if his words made her realize that she was actually face to face with him—that somehow he must discover what she would rather have died than reveal. Biting her lips to hold back speech, she jerked on Majesty's bridle, struck him with her whip, spurred him.

Stewart's iron arm held the horse. Then, in a flash of passion, she struck at Stewart's face, missed it, struck again and hit.

With one pull, almost drawing her from the saddle, he tore the whip from her hands. It was not that action on his part, or the masterfulness of his look, so much as the livid mark on his face where the whip had lashed, that quieted her fury.

"That's nothing," he said with something of his old audacity. "That's nothing—to how you've hurt me!"

Madeline battled with herself for control. This man would not be denied. The piercing eyes he bent upon her burned her, went through her, as if he were looking into her soul. Then her quick sight caught a fleeting doubt, a wistfulness, a surprised and saddened certainty in his eyes. She

saw it shade and pass away. Her woman's intuition, as keen as her sight, told her that Stewart in that moment had sustained a shock of bitter, final truth.

For the third time he repeated his question. Madeline did not answer; she could not speak.

"You don't know I love you, do you?" he continued passionately; "that ever since you stood before me in that hole at Chiricahua I've loved you? You can't see that I've been another man, loving you, working for you, living for you? You won't believe that I've turned my back on the old, wild life, that I've been decent and honorable and happy and useful—*your kind of a cowboy?* How could you tell that a wild fellow, faithless to mother and sister, except in memory, riding a hard, drunken trail straight to perdition, had looked into the eyes of a beautiful woman infinitely beyond him and above him, and had so loved her that he was saved—that he became faithful again—that he saw her face in every flower and her eyes in the blue heaven? Who could tell you, when at night I stood alone under these Western stars, how deep in my soul I was glad just to be alive, to be able to do something for you, to be near you, to stand between you and trouble or danger, to feel somehow that I was a part, just a little part, of the West you had come to love?"

Madeline was mute. She heard her heart thundering in her ears.

Stewart leaped at her. His powerful hand closed on her arm. She trembled. His action presaged the old instinctive violence.

"No, but you think I kept Bonita up in the mountains, that I went secretly to meet her, that all the while I served you I was—oh, I know what you think! I know now why you discharged me! I never knew till I made you look at me. Now say it! *Speak!*"

White-hot, blinded, utterly in the fiery grasp of passion, powerless to stem the rush of a word both shameful and revealing and fatal, Madeline cried:

"Yes!"

Stewart had wrenched the word from her, but he was not subtle enough, not sufficiently versed in the mystery of woman's motive, to divine the deep significance of her reply. Plain it was that it had only literal meaning for him, confirming the dishonor in which she held him.

Dropping her arm, he shrank back—a strange action for the savage and crude man she judged him to be.

"But that day at Chiricahua you spoke of faith," he burst out. "You said the greatest thing in the world was faith in human nature. You said the finest men had been those who had fallen low and had risen. You said you had faith in me. *You made me have faith in myself!*"

His reproach, without bitterness or scorn, was a lash to her old egoistic self-confidence. She had preached a beautiful principle, but she had failed to live up to it. She understood his rebuke, she wondered and wavered; but the affront to her pride had been too great, the tumult within her breast had been too startlingly fierce. She could not speak.

The moment passed and with it Stewart's brief, rugged splendor of simplicity.

"You think I am vile," he said. "You think—that about Bonita! I could make you ashamed—I could tell you—"

His passionate utterance ceased with a snap of his teeth. His lips set in a thin, bitter line. The agitation of his face preceded a convulsive wrestling of his shoulders. All this swift action denoted an inner combat, and it nearly overwhelmed him.

"No! No!" he panted.

Was it his answer to some mighty temptation? Then, like a bent sapling released, he sprang erect.

"I'll be the man—the dog—you think me!" he cried.

He laid hold of her arm with rude, powerful clutch. One pull drew her sliding half out of the saddle into his arms. She fell with her breast against his, not wholly free of stirrups or horse, and there she hung, utterly powerless.

Maddened, writhing, she tore to release herself. All she could accomplish was to twist herself, raise herself high enough to see his face. That almost paralyzed her. Did he mean to kill her?

He wrapped his arms around her and crushed her tighter, closer to him. She felt the pound of his heart; her own seemed to have frozen. Then he pressed his burning lips to hers. It was a long, terrible kiss. She felt him shake.

"Oh, Stewart! I implore you—let me go!" she whispered.

His white face loomed over hers. She closed her eyes. He rained kisses upon her

face, but no more upon her mouth. On her closed eyes, her hair, her cheeks, her neck, he pressed his lips—lips that lost their fire and grew cold. Then he released her, and, lifting and righting her in the saddle, he held her arm to keep her from falling.

For a moment Madeline sat on her horse with shut eyes. She dreaded the light.

"I reckon you sure can't say you've never been kissed," Stewart said. His voice seemed a long way off. "But that was coming to you, so be game. Here!"

She felt something hard and cold and metallic thrust into her hand. He made her fingers close over it, hold it.

The feel of the thing revived her. She opened her eyes. Stewart had given her his gun. He stood with his broad breast against her knee, and she looked up to see that old, mocking smile on his face.

"Go ahead! Throw my gun on me! Be a thoroughbred!"

Madeline did not yet grasp his meaning.

"You can put me down in that quiet place on the hill beside Monty Price."

Madeline dropped the gun with a shuddering cry of horror. The meaning of his words, the memory of Monty, the certainty that she would kill Stewart if she held the gun an instant longer tortured the self-accusing cry from her.

Stewart stooped to pick up the weapon.

"You might have saved me a lot of trouble," he said, with another flash of the mocking smile. "You're beautiful and sweet and proud, but you're no thoroughbred! Majesty Hammond, *adios!*"

Stewart leaped for the saddle of his horse and, with a flying mount, crashed through the mesquits to disappear.

XXXIII

In the shaded seclusion of her room, with her face buried deep among the soft cushions on her couch, Madeline Hammond lay prostrate and quivering under the outrage she had suffered.

The afternoon wore away; twilight fell; night came; and then she rose to sit by the window, to let the cool wind blow upon her face. She passed through hours of unintelligible shame, impotent rage, and futile striving to reason away her defilement.

The train of brightening stars seemed to mock her with their unattainable, passionless serenity. She had loved them, and now she imagined she hated them and

everything connected with this wild, fateful, and abrupt West.

She would go home!

The great stars, blinking white and cold over the dark crags, looked down upon her and, as always, after she had watched them for a while, they enthralled her.

"Under Western stars!" she mused, thinking a little scornfully of the romantic destiny that they had blazed for her idle sentiment.

Nevertheless, they were beautiful; they were speaking; they were mocking; they drew her.

"Ah!" she sighed. "It will not be so very easy to leave them, after all!"

Madeline closed and darkened the window. She struck a light. It was necessary to tell the anxious servants who knocked that she was well and required nothing. A soft step on the walk outside arrested her. Who was there—Nels, or Nick Steele, or Stillwell? Who shared the guardianship over her now that Monty Price was dead, and that other—that savage—had gone away? It was monstrous and unfathomable that she regretted him.

The light annoyed her. Complete darkness fitted her strange mood. She retired and tried to compose herself to sleep; but sleep, for her, was not a matter of will. Her cheeks burned so hotly that she rose to bathe them. Cold water would not alleviate this burning; and then, despairing of forgetfulness, she lay down again with a shameful gratitude for the cloak of night. Stewart's kisses were there, scorching her lips, her closed eyes, her swelling neck. They penetrated deeper and deeper into her blood, into her heart, into her soul—the terrible farewell kisses of a wild, passionate, hardened man. Despite his baseness he had loved her!

Late in the night Madeline fell asleep. In the morning she was pale and languid, but in a mental condition that promised composure.

It was considerably after her regular hour that she went to her office. The door was open, and just outside, tipped back in a chair, sat Stillwell.

"Mawnin', Miss Majesty," he said, as he rose to greet her with his usual courtesy.

There were signs of trouble in his lined face. Madeline shrank inwardly, fearing his old lamentations about Stewart. Then she saw a dusty, ragged pony in the yard and a little burro drooping under a heavy

pack. Both animals bore evidence of long, hard travel.

"To whom do they belong?" asked Madeline.

"Them critters? Why, to Danny Mains," replied Stillwell with a cough that betrayed embarrassment.

"Danny Mains?" echoed Madeline wonderingly.

"Wal, I said so."

Stillwell was indeed not himself.

"Is Danny Mains here?" she asked in sudden curiosity.

The old cattleman nodded gloomily.

"Yep, he's hyar, all right. Sloped in from the hills, an' he hollered to see Bonita. He's locoed, too, about that little black-eyed hussy. Why, he hardly said 'Howdy, Bill,' before he began to ask about the girl; so I took him in to see her. He's been there more'n a half-hour now."

Evidently Stillwell's sensitive feelings had been ruffled. Madeline's curiosity changed to blank astonishment, which left her with a thrilling premonition. She caught her breath. A thousand thoughts seemed thronging for clear conception in her mind.

Rapid footsteps, with an accompaniment of clinking spurs, sounded in the hallway. Then a young man ran out upon the porch. He resembled a cowboy in his lithe build, in his garb and action, in the way he wore his gun; but his face, instead of being red, had a clear, brown tan. His eyes were blue; his hair was light and curly. He was a handsome, frank-faced boy.

At sight of Madeline he slammed down his sombrero and, leaping at her, he possessed himself of her hands. His swift violence not only alarmed her, but painfully reminded her of something she wished to forget.

This cowboy bent his head and kissed her hands and wrung them, and when he straightened up he was crying.

"Miss Hammond, she's safe, an' almost well, an' what I feared most ain't so, thank God!" he cried. "Sure I'll never be able to pay you for all you've done for her! She's told me how she was dragged down here—how Gene tried to save her—how you spoke up for Gene an' her, too—how Monty at the last threw his guns—poor Monty! We were good friends, Monty an' I; but it wasn't friendship for me that made Monty stand in there. He would have saved her, anyway. Monty Price was

the whitest man I ever knew. There's Nels an' Nick an' Gene—they've been some friends to me, but Monty Price was grand! He never knew, any more than you or Bill here, or the boys, what Bonita was to me."

Stillwell's kind and heavy hand fell upon the cowboy's shoulder.

"Danny, what's all this queer gab?" he asked. "An' you're takin' some liberty with Miss Hammond, who never seen you before. Come, ease up now, an' talk sense!"

The cowboy's frank face broke into a smile. He dashed the tears from his eyes and laughed. His laugh had a pleasant, boyish, happy ring.

"Bill, old pal, stand bridle-down a minute, will you?" Then he bowed to Madeline. "I beg your pardon, Miss Hammond, for seemin' rudeness. I'm Danny Mains, an' Bonita is my wife. I'm so crazy glad she's safe an' unharmed an' so grateful to you that—why, sure, it's a wonder I didn't kiss you outright!"

"Bonita's your wife!" ejaculated Stillwell in amazement.

"Sure! We've been married for months," replied Danny happily. "Gene Stewart did it—good old Gene! I guess maybe I haven't come to pay him up for all he's done for me! You see, I've been in love with Bonita for two years; an' Gene—you know, Bill, what a way Gene has with girls—he was tryin' to get Bonita to have me."

Madeline's quick, varying emotions were swallowed up in a boundless gladness. Something dark, deep, heavy, and somber was flooded from her heart. She had a sudden rich sense of gratitude toward this smiling, clean-faced cowboy, whose blue eyes flashed through tears.

"Danny Mains," she said, "if you are as glad as your news has made me—if you really think I merit such a reward—you may kiss me outright!"

With a bashful wonder, but with right hearty will, Danny Mains availed himself of this gracious privilege. Stillwell snorted. The signs of his phenomenal smile were manifest; otherwise Madeline would have thought that snort an indication of furious disapproval.

"Bill, straddle a chair," said Danny. "You've gone back a heap these last few months, frettin' over your bad boys, Danny an' Gene. You'll need support under you while I'm throwin' my yarn. Story of my life, Bill!" He placed a chair for Made-

line. "Miss Hammond, beggin' your pardon again, I want you to listen, too. You've the face an' eyes of a woman who loves to hear of other people's happiness. Besides, somehow it's easy for me to talk lookin' at you."

His manner subtly changed. Possibly it took on a little swagger; certainly he lost the dignity that he had shown under stress of feeling; he was now more like a cowboy about to boast or affect some stunning maneuver. Walking off the porch, he stood before the weary horse and burro.

"Played out!" he exclaimed.

Then, with the swift violence so characteristic of men of his class, he slipped the pack from the burro and threw saddle and bridle from the horse.

"There! See 'em! Take a look at the last dog-gone weight you ever packed! You've been some faithful to Danny Mains, an' Danny Mains pays! Never a saddle again, or a strap or a halter or a hobble, so long as you live! So long as you live nothin' but grass an' clover an' cool water in shady places an' dusty swales to roll in an' rest an' sleep!"

Then he untied the pack and, taking a small but heavy sack from it, he came back upon the porch. Deliberately he emptied the contents of the sack at Stillwell's feet. Piece after piece of rock thumped upon the floor. The pieces were sharp, ragged, evidently broken from a ledge; the body of them was white in color, with yellow veins and bars and streaks.

Stillwell took up one rock after another, stared, and stuttered. He put the rocks to his lips and dug into them with his shaking fingers. Then he lay back in his chair, his head against the wall; and as he gaped at Danny the old smile began to transform his face.

"Lord! Danny, if you hev'n't been an' gone an' struck it rich!"

Danny regarded Stillwell with lofty condescension.

"Some rich," he said. "Now, Bill, what've we got here, say, offhand?"

"Oh, Lord, Danny! I'm afraid to say. Nothin' under ten thousand dollars a ton! I never seen sich free gold. Look, Miss Majesty, jest look at the gold! I've lived among prospectors an' gold-mines fer thirty years, an' I never seen the beat of this. Tell us how you found it, Danny."

"Bill, it was some long time ago when you sent me in to El Cajon with a pay-

roll," said Danny. "Reckon you've been some disheartened rememberin' that. Fact is, I know how you felt, because Gene kept me posted. Well, that day, ridin' in, I run up against some of Don Carlos's *vaqueros*. They pretended to be friendly, as they always done; but they laid me out with a crack on the head. When I came to I was layin' in the road an' Bonita was fussin' over me. The money was gone; so was my horse. Pretty soon I come to all right, an' Bonita spotted my horse off on the grass. She got him. I wasn't goin' to let her ride away alone when she told me she was in trouble. Besides, I figured myself disgraced; so we hit the trail for the Peloncillos. Bonita had Gene's horse an' she was to meet him up on the trail. We got to the mountains all right an' nearly starved for a few days till Gene found us. He had got in trouble himself an' couldn't fetch much with him.

"We made for the Craggs an' built a cabin. I come down that day Gene sent his horse to you. Never saw Gene so broken-hearted! Well, after he sloped for the border, Bonita an' I were hard put to it to keep alive; but we got along, an' I think it was then she began to care a little for me. I killed cougars an' went down to Rodeo to get bounties for the skins an' bought grub an' supplies we needed. Once I went into El Cajon an' run plumb into Gene. He was back from the revolution an' cuttin' up pretty bad; but I got away from him, after doin' all I could to drag him out of town. A long time after that Gene trailed up to the Craggs an' found us. Gene had stopped drinkin'; he'd changed wonderful, an' was fine an' dandy. It was then he began to pester the life out of me to make me marry Bonita. I was happy, so was she, an' I was some scared of spoilin' it. Bonita had been a little flirt, an' I was afraid she'd get shy of a halter; so I bucked against Gene. But I was all locoed, as it turned out. Gene would come up occasionally, packin' supplies for us, an' always he'd get after me to do the right thing by Bonita. Gene's dog-gone hard to buck against; and finally he fetched up Padre Marcos an' we was married."

Danny paused in his narrative, breathing hard, as if the memory of the wedding had stirred strong and thrilling feeling in him. Stillwell's smile was rapturous. Madeline leaned toward Danny with her eyes shining.

"Miss Hammond, an' you, Bill Stillwell—listen, for this is a strange thing I've got to tell you. The afternoon Bonita an' I were married, when Gene an' the *padre* had gone, I was happy one minute an' low-hearted the next. I was miserable because I had a bad name; I couldn't go among my old friends without money to pay back what I'd lost. I couldn't buy even a decent dress for my pretty wife. Bonita heard me sayin' so, an' she was some mysterious. She told me the story of what she called the lost mine of the *padres* an' she kissed me an' made joyful over me in the strangest way. I knew marriage went to women's heads, an' I thought even Bonita had a spell."

"Well, she left me for a little; an' when she came back she said she wanted to show me where she always sat an' waited an' watched for me when I was away. She led me round under the Craggs to a long slope. It was some pretty there—clear an' open, with a long sweep, an' the desert yawnin' deep an' red. An' there, under the Craggs, was gold—gold everywhere—surface gold—gold deep in the cracks. At that I was worse than locoed. I went gold-crazy. I worked like seventeen burros. Bill, I dug a car-load of gold-bearin' quartz an' never got to live rock. Bonita watched the trails for me an' brought me water. That was how she come to get caught by Pat Hawe an' his guerrillas. Hawe was so set on doin' Gene dirt that he mixed up with Don Carlos. Bonita will tell you some staggerin' news about that outfit; but just now my story's all gold."

Danny Mains got up and kicked back his chair. Blue lightning gleamed from his eyes as he thrust his right hand toward Stillwell.

"Bill, old pal, put her there—give me your hand!" he said. "You were always my friend. It stuck in my craw how you refused to think I was crooked. Gene told me. Well, Danny Mains owes you an' Gene Stewart a good deal, an' Danny Mains pays! I want two pardners to help me work my gold-mine—you an' Gene! If there's any ranch hereabouts that takes your fancy I'll buy it! If Miss Hammond ever gets tired of her range an' stock an' home I'll buy them for Gene. If there's any railroad or town round here that she likes I'll buy it. If I see anythin' myself that I like I'll buy it! Go out, find Gene

for me. I'm achin' to see him, to tell him. Go fetch him, an' right here in this house, with my wife an' Miss Hammond as witnesses, we'll draw up a pardnership. Go find him, Bill! I want to show him this gold, to show him how Danny Mains pays! An' the only bitter drop in my cup to-day is that I can't ever pay Monty Price!"

XXXIV

MADLINE's lips tremblingly formed to tell Danny Mains and Stillwell that the cowboy they wanted so much had left the ranch; but the flame of fine loyalty that burned in Danny's eyes, the happiness that made the old cattleman's face at once amazing and beautiful, stiffened her lips. She watched the huge Stillwell and the little cowboy, both talking wildly, as they walked off arm in arm to find Stewart. She imagined something of what Danny's disappointment would be, of the elder man's consternation and grief, when they learned that Stewart had left for the border.

At this juncture she looked up to see a strange yet familiar figure approaching. It was Padre Marcos.

Madeline felt herself trembling. What did the *padre's* presence mean on this day? He had always seemed to avoid meeting her. He had been exceedingly grateful for all she had done for his people, his church, and himself; but he had never thanked her in person. Perhaps he had come for that purpose now; but Madeline did not believe so.

Mention of Padre Marcos, or sight of him, had always occasioned Madeline a little indefinable shock; and now, as he stepped to the porch, a shrunken, stooped, and sad-faced man, she was startled.

The *padre* bowed low to her. His voice was low-toned and grave.

"*Señora*, will you grant me audience?" he asked in perfect English.

"Certainly, Padre Marcos," replied Madeline, and she led him into her office.

"May I beg to close the doors?" he asked. "It is a matter of great moment which you might not care to have any one hear."

Wonderingly Madeline inclined her head. The *padre* gently closed one door and then the other.

"*Señora*, I have come to disclose a secret—my own sinfulness in keeping it—and to implore your pardon. Do you re-

member that night when Señor Stewart dragged me before you in the waiting-room at El Cajon?"

"Yes," replied Madeline.

"*Señora*, since that night you have been Señor Stewart's wife."

Madeline became as motionless as stone. She seemed to feel nothing—only to hear.

"You are Señor Stewart's wife. I have kept the secret under fear of death; but I could keep it no longer. Señor Stewart may kill me now. Ah, *señora*, it is very strange to you! You were so frightened that night—you knew not what happened. Señor Stewart threatened me. He forced you. He made me speak the service. He made you speak the Spanish 'yes.' And I—*señora*, knowing the deeds of these sinful cowboys, fearing worse than disgrace to one so beautiful and as good as you, I could not do less than marry you truly. At least you should be his wife; so I married you in the service of my church."

"Good Heavens!" cried Madeline, rising.

"Hear me! I implore you, *señora*, hear me out! Do not leave me! Ah, *señora*, let me speak a word for Señor Stewart. He did not know what he was doing that night. In the morning he came to me and made me swear by my cross that I would not reveal the disgrace he had put upon you. If I did, he would kill me. Life is nothing to the American *vaquero*, *señora*. I promised to respect his command; but I did not tell him then that you were his wife. He did not dream I had truly married you. He went to fight for the freedom of my country—*señora*, he is one splendid soldier—and I brooded over the sin of my secret. If he were killed, I need never tell you; but if he lived I knew that I must do so some day.

"It was strange indeed that Señor Stewart and Padre Marcos should both come to this ranch together. The great change your goodness wrought in my beloved people was no greater than the change in Señor Stewart. *Señora*, I feared you would go away one day—go back to your Eastern home ignorant of the truth. The time came when I confessed to Stewart. I said that I must also tell you. *Señora*, the man went mad with joy. I have never seen so supreme a joy. He threatened no more to kill me. That strong, cruel *vaquero* begged me not to tell the secret—never to reveal it. He confessed his love for you—a love,

señora, something like the desert storm. He swore by all that was once sacred to him, and by my cross and my church, that he would be a good man—that he would be worthy to have you secretly his wife for the little time life left him to worship at your shrine. You need never know. As long as you did not leave the West, or seem to desire marriage, you need never know. But if you left, if you meant to marry, then he would quietly and silently go to his death. *Señora*, he meant it. Death has no terrors for such a man. I know that he would have welcomed death, because it would have served you. So I held my tongue, half pitying him, half fearing him, and praying for some God-sent light.

"*Señora*, it was a fool's paradise that Stewart lived in. I saw him often. When he took me up into the mountains to have me marry that wayward Bonita and her lover I learned to know the real Stewart. I came to have respect for a man whose ideas about nature and life and God were at variance with mine. He taught me many things. He made me doubt much that heretofore I have thought wisdom and truth. He professed to have no religion; but the man is a worshiper of God in all material things. He is a part of the wind and sun and desert and mountain that have made him. He is like them. He may be hard and violent, but he is just and true. Remembering his vice of drunkenness, his love of fighting, his contempt of death, his indifference to spilling blood, I was astounded to find a man of gentleness and kindness. I have never heard more beautiful words than those in which he persuaded Bonita to accept Señor Mains, to forget her old lovers, and henceforth to be faithful and happy. For Señor Stewart it was natural to be loyal to his friend to have a fine sense of the honor due to a woman who had loved and given, to bring about their marriage, to succor them in their need and loneliness. It was natural for him never to speak of them. He seldom speaks needlessly. It would have been natural for him to give his life in their defense, if peril menaced them. *Señora*, I want you to understand that to me the man has the same stability, the same strength, the same elements which I am in the habit of attributing to the physical life around me in this wild and rugged desert. If you can see that, you will see he is wonderful."

Madeline listened as one under a spell. It was not only that this soft-voiced, eloquent priest knew how to move the heart, to stir the soul; but his defense, his praise of Stewart, if they had been couched in the crude speech of cowboys, would have been a glory to her.

"*Señora*, I pray you, do not misunderstand my mission. Beyond my confession to you I have only one duty—to tell you of the man whose wife you are. The ways of God are inscrutable. I am only a humble instrument. You are a noble woman, and Señor Stewart is a man of desert-iron forged anew in the crucible of love. *Quien sabe?* Señor Stewart swore he would kill me if I betrayed him; but he will not lift his hand against me. For the man bears you a very great and pure love, and it has changed him. I no longer fear his threat, but I do fear his anger should he ever know I spoke of his love, of his fool's paradise. I have watched his dark face turned to the sun setting over the desert. I have watched him lift it to the light of the stars. *Señora*, I am a priest, and I can read the soul, but no poor words of mine would ever be adequate to express what is in Señor Stewart's soul. Think, my gracious and noble lady, think what is his paradise. To love you above the spirit of the flesh; to know you are his wife; his, never to be another's except by his sacrifice; to watch you with a secret glory of joy and pride; to stand, while he might, between you and evil; to find his happiness in service; to wait, with never a dream of telling you, for the hour to come when, to leave you free, he must go out to his death.

"*Señora*, that is beautiful, it is sublime, it is terrible, it is appalling. It has brought me to you with my confession. I repeat, *señora*, the ways of God are inscrutable. What is the meaning of your influence upon Señor Stewart? Once he was merely an animal—low, vile, brutal, unheeding, unquicken; now he is a man—I have not seen his like! So I beseech you in my humble office as priest, as a lover of mankind, before you send Stewart away to seek death, to be sure that there is here no mysterious dispensation of God. Love, that mighty and blessed and unknown thing, might be at work. *Señora*, I have heard that somewhere, in the rich Eastern cities, you are a very great lady. I know you are good and noble. That is all I want to

know. To me you are only a woman, just as Señor Stewart is only a man. So I pray you, *señora*, before you let Stewart give you freedom at such cost, be sure you do not want his love, lest you cast away something sweet and ennobling which you yourself have created!"

XXXV

BLINDED, like a wild creature, Madeline Hammond ran to her room. She felt as if a stroke of lightning had shattered the shadowy substance of the dream that she had made of real life. The wonder of Danny Mains's story, the strange regret with which she had realized her injustice to Stewart, the astounding secret revealed by Padre Marcos—all these things were utterly forgotten in the sudden consciousness of her own love.

She fled as if pursued. With trembling hands she locked the doors; drew the blinds of the windows that opened on the porch; pushed chairs aside so that she could pace the length of her room. She was alone now, and she walked with soft, hurried, uneven steps. She could be herself here; she needed no mask; the long-established habit of serenely hiding the truth from the world and from herself could be broken.

She paused in her swift pacing to and fro. She liberated the thought that knocked at the gates of her mind. With quivering lips she whispered it. Then she spoke aloud:

"I will say it—hear it. I—I love him! I love him!"

She repeated the astounding truth, but she doubted her own identity.

"Am I still Madeline Hammond? What has happened? Who am I?"

She stood where the light from the one unclosed window fell upon her image in a mirror.

"Who is this woman?"

She expected to see a familiar, dignified person—a quiet unruffled figure—a tranquil face with dark, proud eyes and calm, proud lips. No, she did not see Madeline Hammond. She did not see any one she knew. Were her eyes, like her heart, playing her false? The figure before her was instinct with pulsating life. The hands she saw were clasped together and pressed deep into a swelling bosom that heaved with each panting breath. The face she saw—white, rapt, strangely glowing, with

parted, quivering lips, with great, staring, tragic eyes—this could not be Madeline Hammond's face!

Yet, as she looked, she knew that no fancy could really deceive her—that she was only Madeline Hammond come at last to the end of brooding dreams. She swiftly realized the change in her, divined its cause and meaning, accepted it as inevitable, and straightway fell back again into that mood of bewildering amaze.

Calmness was unattainable; tranquillity was impossible. She could not go back to count the innumerable, imperceptible steps of her undoing. Her old power of reflecting and analyzing seemed to have vanished in a pulse-stirring sense of one new emotion. She only felt.

All her pacing strides and quick breaths and tingling nerves and muffled, painful heart-beats—all her instinctive outward action that was a physical relief—all her involuntary inner strife that was maddening, yet unutterably sweet, seemed to be just one great stunning effect of surprise.

In a nature like hers, where strength of feeling had long been inhibited as a matter of training, such a transformation as the sudden consciousness of passionate love required time for its awakening, time for its sway.

But at last the enlightening moment came; and Madeline Hammond faced not only the love in her heart, but the thought of the man she loved.

When she let herself think of Gene Stewart—think that the impossible had happened and that she loved him—then she became a woman in the multiple, incomprehensible ways wherein she had never understood womanhood. For a moment, or an hour, she imagined she was merely a prey to the emotions that might rush to the overwhelming of one of her sex. She loved him, but he was a cowboy, and she could never be anything to him. She had unwittingly allowed her love of the range and the desert and the mountain, of the great, free, outdoor West, to trap her into an infatuation for one of its wild characters.

It was not really Stewart whom she loved, but the West as embodied in him. She would get over her madness. Some such lesson might have been expected as punishment for the summary disruption of her life in the East. She merited the lesson.

This, then, was the conclusive event in that long struggle to decide her future. She would go home where she belonged, where there were no stalwart, violent, fire-tempered cowboys to fascinate a young woman who had an innate weakness for the elemental!

Suddenly, as she raged, something in her took arms against indictment of Gene Stewart. She saw him drunk, violent, brutal; she saw him abandoned, base, lost; but out of the picture she had made there grew one of a different man—weak, sick, changed by shock, growing strong, strangely altered in spirit, silent, lonely like an eagle, secretive, tireless, faithful, soft as a woman, hard as iron to endure, and, at the last, noble.

She softened. In a flash her complex mood changed to one wherein she thought of the truth, the beauty, the wonder of Stewart's uplifting. Humbly she trusted that she had helped him to climb. That influence had been the best she had ever exerted. It had wrought magic in her own character. By it she had reached a better, higher, nobler plane of trust in man. She had received infinitely more than she had given.

"Oh, it is terrible!" she cried. "I am his wife—his wife! And I can never be anything to him. Could I be anything to him—I, Madeline Hammond? But I am his wife, and I love him! I am the wife of a cowboy. That might be undone. Can my love be undone? Ah, do I want anything undone? He is *gone*—and probably forever. Could he have meant—I will not, dare not think of that. He will come back. No, he never will come back. Oh, what shall I do?"

For Madeline Hammond the days following that storm of feeling were leaden-footed, endless, hopeless, a long succession of weary hours, sleepless hours, passionate hours, all haunted by a fear slowly growing into torture—a fear that Stewart had crossed the border to invite the bullet which would give her freedom.

And finally the day came when she knew this to be the truth. The spiritual tidings reached her, not subtly as so many divinations had come, but in a clear, vital flash of certainty.

Then indeed she suffered. She burned inwardly, and the nature of that deep fire

showed through her eyes. She kept to herself, waiting, waiting for her fears to be confirmed.

At times she broke out in wrath—at the circumstances that she had failed to control, at Stewart, at herself. She had been blind to a man's honesty, manliness, uprightness, and faith. She had been dead to love, to nobility that she had herself created. Padre Marcos's grave, wise words returned to haunt her. She fought her bitterness, scorned her intelligence, hated her pride, and, weakening, gave up more and more to a yearning, almost hopeless hope.

She had shunned the light of the stars, as she had violently dismissed every hinting memory of Stewart's kisses. But one night she went deliberately to her window. There they shone. Her stars! Bright, beautiful, white, serene, passionless as always, but strangely closer, warmer, speaking a kinder language, helpful as they had never been, teaching her now that regret was futile, revealing to her the supreme duty of life—to be true!

Those shining stars made her yield. She whispered to them that they had claimed her—the West claimed her—Stewart claimed her forever, whether he lived or died.

She gave herself up wholly to her love for him.

It was as if he were there in person, dark-faced, fire-eyed, violent in his action, crushing her to his breast in that farewell moment, kissing her with one burning kiss of passion, then with cold, terrible lips of renunciation.

"I am your wife!" she whispered to him.

In that moment, throbbing, exalted, quivering in her first sweet, tumultuous surrender to love, she would have given her all, her life, to be in his arms again, to meet his lips with hers, to put forever out of his power any thought of wild self-sacrifice!

On the morning of the next day, when Madeline went out upon the porch, Stillwell, haggard and stern, with a husky, incoherent word, handed her a message from El Cajon. She read:

El Capitan Stewart captured by rebel soldiers in fight at Agua Prieta yesterday. He was a sharpshooter in the Federal ranks. Sentenced to death Thursday at sunset.

(To be concluded)

THE MATCH-MAKER

A THANKSGIVING STORY

BY CHESTER CORNISH

MISS PATIENCE DARVEL, my oldest and dearest friend, had asked me to forego the joys of Thanksgiving with my family in order that I might relieve her of a loneliness which, by an odd combination of circumstances, threatened her upon that day of universal kindness.

The afternoon light was fading rapidly as Miss Patience and I drew our chairs in front of the old-fashioned mantel. For a while we silently watched the red fire and the blue smoke playing tag over the glowing hearth. What picture arose before her out of the blaze I cannot tell; as for me, I could see but one image in the flames, could hear but one voice in the purr and sputter of the logs—the face of dear Olivia, the soft cadence of her speech.

I was absorbed in miserable contemplation of my fate—a final dismissal from my lady's presence, following a hot interchange of scorn and temper over some small matter made great by the greatness of our love—when I was recalled to the present by the placid tones of Miss Patience.

"I am afraid, Harry, that I am really an incurable old match-maker. I was openly charged with it the other day, and in looking back over my life I am afraid I must admit that my critic was right. The only failure I can recall is the case of yourself and Olivia; but that was due to no fault of mine. You are both so hot-headed and foolish that I had to wash my hands of the whole affair. I think that perhaps you didn't care for each other very much, after all."

"Why, Miss Patience," I protested, "you know I'd give all I possess just to see her again and tell her what a brute I feel for having spoken to her as I did!"

"Well, you behaved very badly," con-

tinued my friend; "and you must take your punishment. Now I don't want to hear another word about it, for I'm going to talk to you about something else. I've had it on my mind to tell you about it, oh, for years and years, but I could never bring myself to begin. It's something which has a good deal to do with you, in a certain sense. I've never told it to a living soul; but when I was held up to myself the other day as a match-maker, the desire to tell you the story came over me very strongly. If you can take your mind from useless pining after Olivia, and listen to me for a few minutes, I'll tell you something that will interest you.

"You know that when I first met your mother, I was a pupil at her little school out at Lost Trail, Wyoming. At that time she was about twenty, and I was thirteen. I was the bad girl of the school, always in trouble, always causing the teacher anxiety. There was a streak of mischief in me that seemed to master my nature, for it showed quite as much with those I loved as with those I disliked.

"Well, there was a day on which I behaved very badly, and Rebecca made me stay behind after all the other children had gone home. She came and talked to me, and said things that made me cry and feel very mean and wicked. I could have stood it better if she had been angry, and had whipped me; but she just sat beside me and took my hand and explained things. She told me how she loved all the children, and me most of all, because she feared most for my future. She had to punish me, she said, because, if she didn't, it wouldn't be fair to the girls who were good all the time. She was sure I never thought how my bad conduct made things hard for her. I could not know that she had great troubles of

her own, which she had to hide from us all, so that she might always appear cheerful.

"I cried and kissed her, and promised I'd never be bad again. Then she went to her desk, brought out a large album of photographs, and told me to look at the pictures while she went out on the piazza and wrote a letter. The album was full of beautiful pictures of the East—New York, and the coast of Maine, and the Berkshires, and Boston. Then I happened to turn back to the fly-leaf, and written there was this inscription:

"To my dear Rebecca, with my whole heart and my every thought—JOHN BENTLY.

"Suddenly I heard some one sobbing aloud outside the window. I climbed on a chair and looked out, and there was Rebecca with her head bowed down on the table, crying as if her heart would break. I was frightened, and didn't know what to do, so I went back to my seat and began to look at the pictures again.

"Presently Rebecca came in, trying to pretend she hadn't been crying. She took the album from me, made it up into a parcel, and gave it to me, with a letter.

"Now, Patience,' she said, 'you take this letter and this book down to the station. When the Eastern mail-train comes in, give them to a tall, dark man with a heavy mustache, who will get off the cars.'

"I was too much upset to say anything. What with the things she'd said to me, and her crying so badly, and the idea of her giving away an album with such words in it, I didn't know how I felt.

"On the way down to the station my shoe-string came untied, so I sat down to fix it. When I came to pick up the parcel again, my eye caught the address—'Mr. John Bently, passenger on the Eastern express.' Then I saw that the letter was addressed to him, too, and that Rebecca had not sealed it. I had a great struggle with myself. I knew that it would be very wrong to read the letter; but something inside of me kept saying: 'Read it, read it, read it!' So after a while I opened the letter, my heart all the time trying to jump out of my mouth, and this is what I read:

"DEAR JOHN:

"It's no use your stopping off at Lost Trail in the hope of seeing me. I won't see you. Indeed and indeed I don't love you, and it's all been a great mistake. Besides, I can't leave Lost Trail now, or any time soon. There's

a little girl here who needs me badly—the one who brings you this letter. If I can't guide her straight for a few years she will grow into an unhappy woman, for she has beauty and high temper and mischief in her, and she must have some one by her who loves her. Now, John dear, you go back East again, and leave me here to my duty.

"REBECCA.

"Then there were two words of postscript—'Perhaps if—' But they were scratched out, and that was all.

"I didn't know what to do. I was so excited that I could hardly breathe. It was all nonsense about her not caring for him; of course she did. And she was going to give him up so that she might stand by me!

"There was very little time to do anything, for the train was due in a few minutes. I had an inspiration. I tore a piece of paper off the wrapping of the album, and wrote on it:

"John Bently, don't you care what she says, you stay right here in Lost Trail till you get her, and don't tell a soul about this.

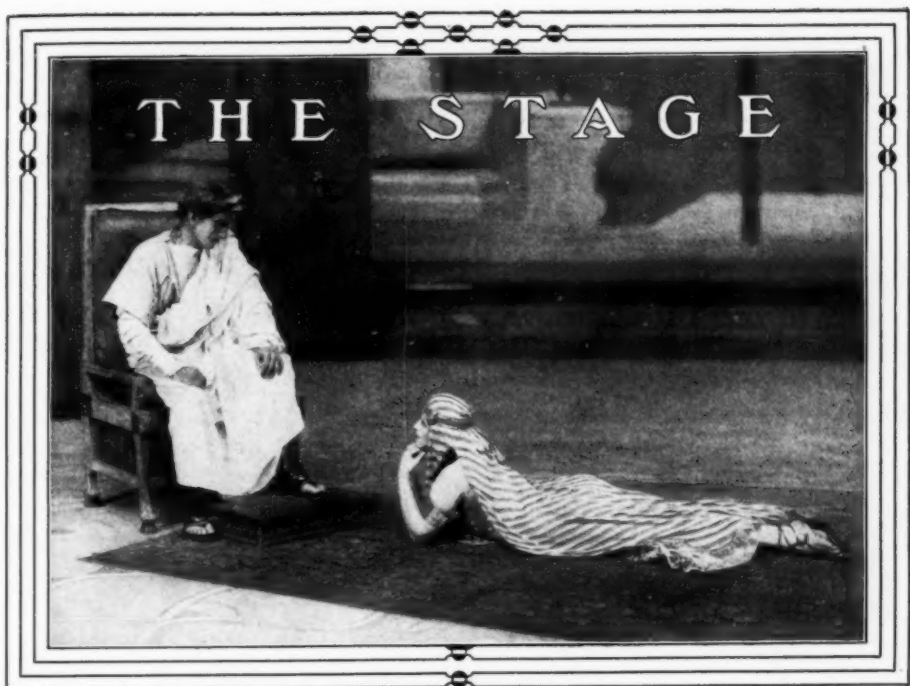
"Then I put it in the envelope with the letter and sealed the flap. When I got to the station the train was coming in; and sure enough, a tall man with a mustache got off the cars. I gave him the letter and the parcel, and ran away before he could speak to me. That man was your father, Harry, and that's how he came to be your father; and as far as I know this is the first time the story has been told.

"So you see, Harry," she concluded, "I was a match-maker even when I was a child. And now I'm going to leave you for a few minutes, because there's some one waiting for me up-stairs; but I'll be back presently."

She left me in the darkness, and I heard her footsteps on the stairs. The fire had died down to a dull glow, and I fell to dreaming. I was brought back to earth by the sound of Miss Patience's voice outside the door. She was saying:

"Now, dear, don't forget that you behaved very badly to him, and that you must be very nice to make up for it!"

The door opened softly. Before I realized it, Olivia was in my arms, her head on my shoulder, her breath on my cheek, her voice, poised between a laugh and a sob, blessing the queen of match-makers.



SIR JOHNSTON FORBES-ROBERTSON AND GERTRUDE ELLIOTT IN BERNARD SHAW'S "CÆSAR AND CLEOPATRA"

From a photograph by the Mirror Studios, London

WHEN LAURETTE TAYLOR FELL DOWN

"I HADN'T any more idea of how to go about getting an engagement than—well, than Michael here," said Laurette Taylor, dropping her hand for an instant on the head of the Irish terrier beside her.

I was interviewing Miss Taylor at the Cort Theater, where she has been playing in "Peg o' My Heart" since last December. After chatting about the performance she gave for Mme. Bernhardt in May, she went back at my request to the start of her career.

She was born in New York—a fact that was, in a sense, a handicap to her. At a remarkably early age she was able to play the piano by ear, and had she been a native of some small town her accomplishment might have been heralded abroad until some local magnate heard of it and lent her a helping hand. As it was, she was but a drop in the bucket of the metropolis; and after she had played and sung and impersonated in both black and white face at church entertainments, and had made up

her mind to go on the stage, the question of how to get there was a poser.

"You see," she explained, "we didn't know any one in the business, and it never dawned on me that Keith & Proctor had the headquarters of their circuit here in New York. Even if it had, I dare say I should never have got beyond the office-boy. Then somebody told my mother that the best way to find out how to pull the ropes was to move into a theatrical boarding-house and absorb information. We acted on the suggestion, and in this way I got the idea of having a printed letter-head containing my picture in various make-ups. This I mailed to different theaters throughout the country, getting the addresses from the *Dramatic Mirror*.

"Well, the only answer I received was from a place in Gloucester, Massachusetts, with an offer of a week's engagement at twenty-five dollars. Of course I accepted, and mother and I took the train for Gloucester in great excitement. When we arrived and found out just what sort of place it was—a cheap concert-hall, where several shows a day were given, and where

there were only two dressing-rooms, one for the men, the other for the women—mother wanted to retreat. But I told her that it would be foolish to balk at the very outset

skirts, and had all the latest slang of the day in their act; and when I got through the manager came to me and said that he would have to cut my pay down to twenty



CHRISTIE MACDONALD, STARRING IN THE NEW VICTOR HERBERT OPERETTA "SWEETHEARTS"

From her latest photograph by Gilbert and Bacon, Philadelphia

of my professional career, so she let me go on at the afternoon performance.

"There was a sister team in the bill—they were really mother and daughter—whose success quite snowed my mild offering under. They kicked high, lifted their

dollars. After I had played in the evening, he came again and told me that I was canceled. Of course, I was heart-broken; but I shall never forget the kindness of the mother in that sister team.

"'Look here,' she said to me, 'you



ANNA HELD, WHO HAS RETURNED TO AMERICA TO HEAD A SPECIAL VAUDEVILLE
COMPANY OF HER OWN

From her latest photograph by Talbot, Paris



ALICE DOVEY, WHO IS SINGING CLEMINCIN IN THE NEW MUSICAL PLAY, "THE MERRY MARTYR"

From her latest photograph by White, New York

would be all right if you would only put a little more ginger into your work."

"She started to show me how to do it; but mother was horrified, and we left Gloucester in what seemed to me disgrace.

"After that I managed to get on at the Boston Athenaeum in the vaudeville part of the entertainment, and then for a time I went into melodrama on the road. This took me clear out to Seattle, where I played in stock, two shows a day, learning and rehearsing a part in one piece while I was acting in another. I used to dose myself on strong coffee to keep awake late at night in order to get in more work, and the result was a journey to the hospital. When I came out, armed with a letter of introduction from Georgia Caine to Mr. Savage, he looked me over and said that he might cast me for a small part in a second company of 'The Devil' if I would go down to the Garden Theater and imitate the work of the girl who was playing the character in No. 1.

"I went down and watched, but for the life of me I couldn't do it as she did, so I didn't get the job. Perhaps it's just as well, for, if I had, I might not have been free to take up with 'Jimmy Valentine,' which introduced me to Broadway. Just now they are rehearsing two road *Pegs*, and trying to make them do everything exactly as I do it; but I have pleaded that the girls should be allowed to put their own individuality into their work."

Laurette Taylor—or Mrs. Hartley Manners, for she married the author of her play—is one of the most delightful persons to interview I have ever encountered. There is no occasion to prolong the talk in the desperate hope that after a while the subject of it may at last say something worth while. Although without her make-up she does not in the least resemble *Peg*, there is the same freedom from affectation in her manner; and her speech has a trace of brogue which leads me to believe that Ireland is not so very far back in her ancestry.

VAUDEVILLE AT THEATER PRICES

Two-dollar vaudeville! That's the most accurate description of "The



JANE GREY, LEADING WOMAN WITH BRUCE M'RAE IN EDGAR SELWYN'S NEW FARCE HIT,
"NEARLY MARRIED"

From her latest photograph by White, New York



NATALIE ALT, SINGING THE PRIMA DONNA RÔLE IN "ADELE"

From a photograph by White, New York

Doll Girl," the musical play which Charles Frohman has imported from Vienna to serve Hattie Williams and Richard Carle. Leo Fall is set down as composer of the music, but the maker of the tuneful ditties in "The Dollar Princess" fails to keep up his average in the present showing, of which the most popular numbers are credited to Jerome Kern and one W. Kollo.

The story amounts to *nil*, the character of the doll girl being too silly for words—of which last, unhappily, she has far too many to speak. Dorothy Webb is the luckless person to whom this rôle falls, Miss Williams having less to do as a termagant actress possessed of fourteen lovers, who have organized themselves into a club. Her dark beauty well suggests the Spanish type, and she does some excellent acting.

Carle is funny along his usual lines, so also is Will West. Indeed, I wonder how Mr. Frohman contrived to sign up so many big names for such comparatively small parts, for in addition to the foregoing there

are Robert Evett, a tenor specially imported from London, Charles McNaughton, and Cheridah Simpson.

"The Doll Girl" is handsomely put on, was well received by the critics, and is so greatly superior to the usual vaudeville show at one dollar a seat as to be quite worth double that sum. For, call it what its sponsors will on the house-bills, it is as a succession of high-class turns that it will attract audiences.

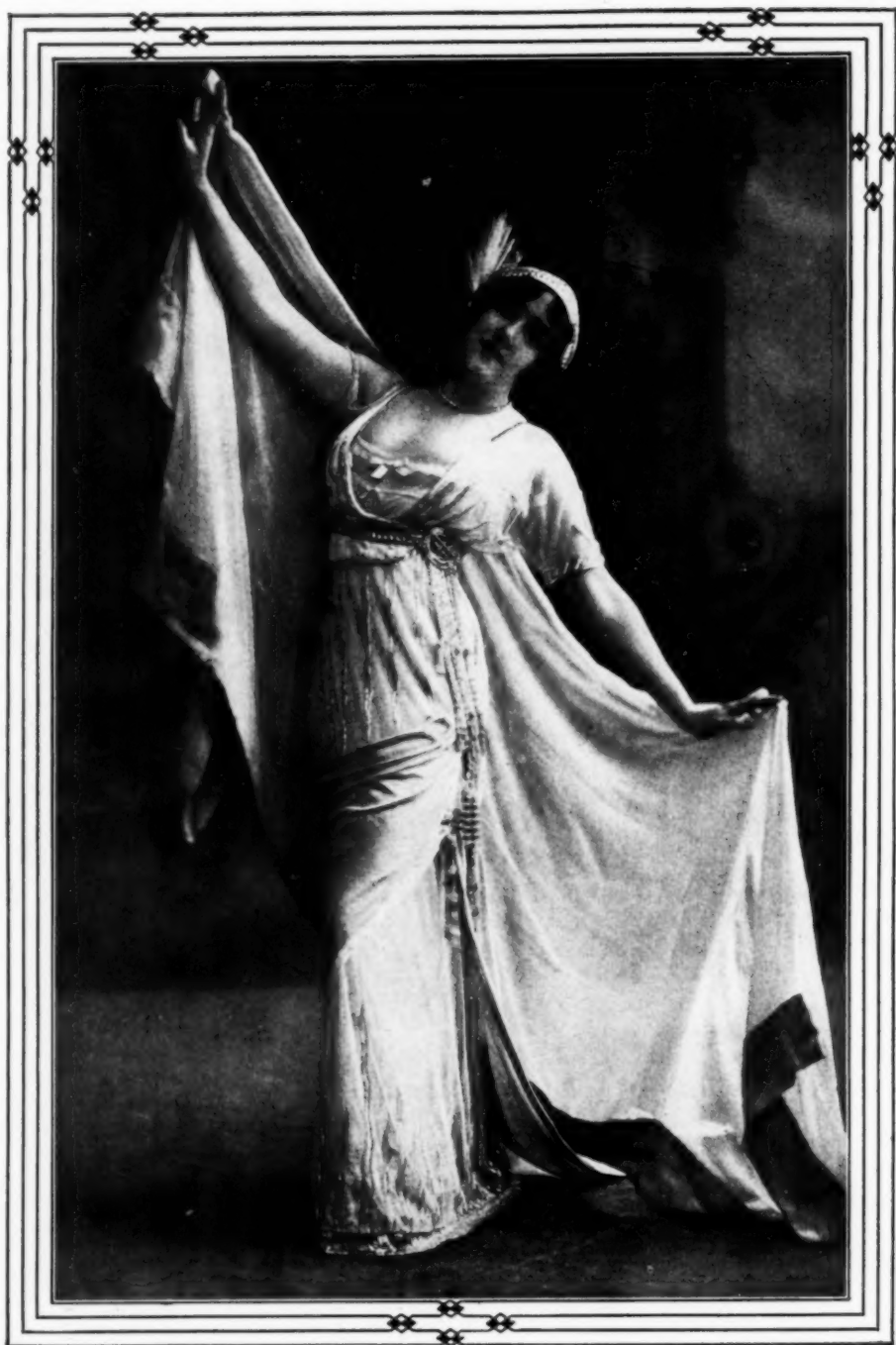
A MODEL MUSICAL COMEDY

If "The Doll Girl" be without form and void, "Adele" complies with all the rules that go to make a musical comedy both consistent and charming. I wonder how many of the regular managers passed this up and allowed a new firm to reap a fortune with it! A score by Jean Briquet, composer of "Alma," must surely have been brought to their attention. Presumably they were too busy looking for tangos and turkey-trots to waste any time listen-



LAURETTE TAYLOR, STARRING IN THE VERY SUCCESSFUL COMEDY "PEG O' MY HEART,"
NOW IN ITS ELEVENTH MONTH IN NEW YORK

From her latest photograph by Bangs, New York



MAY DE SOUSA, LEADING WOMAN WITH DE WOLF HOPPER IN THE MUSICAL COMEDY "LIEBER AUGUSTIN"

From a photograph

ing to a simple little piece whose only novelty was sheer merit.

So quietly did "Adele" creep into town, and so little faith had even the house management in the offering, that tentative arrangements had been made to put on another "white slave" drama at the Longacre when the musical piece met its expected failure; but the critics all hailed it with joy, and the public flocked in droves to the second night, despite the heat.

With practically every song a gem, it would be invidious to single out any one. Not only is the music of "Adele" genuinely attractive, but the story, by Paul Hervé, is interesting and the dialogue punctuated with real wit. Over and above this, the New Era Producing Company has supplied a cast in every way worthy. Natalie Alt, without any Broadway reputation beyond Columbus Circle, proved a constant delight as *Adele*. Hal Forde was a veritable revelation in the part of a baron who played to other people in the cast, and not to the audience. Georgia Caine brought her fine voice and pleasing presence to the rôle of the widow, while Craufurd Kent came out strongly as a weakling lover. The two low-comedy characters, who sell pickled fish, were well handled by Will Danforth and Dallas Welford. I am glad that the latter is at last connected with another hit. After his success with "Mr. Hopkinson," some seasons ago, this English actor was naturalized here; but until now he has never succeeded in finding another good part.

WHEN SHOULD WE LAUGH, AND WHY?

When Boston and New York critics disagree, who shall decide? Obviously the public. So at least believes Philip Bartholomae, who, in exchange for "roasts" of his "Kiss Me Quick" in the Manhattan journals, has been giving these same papers big advertisements containing the opinions of the Hub and of Gotham contrasted.

To my notion, there is far more in "Kiss Me Quick" than in "Believe Me, Xantippe," which contains nothing as delightfully quaint as the prologue spoken by Helen Lowell, telling us what the first-named farce is to be about, and predicting that the portions of it in which she does not figure will not prove as entertaining as the rest. Then there is some excellent fooling—albeit a bit too much of it—in the taking of motion pictures on a country

estate; and another modern invention is also pressed into effective service when Arthur Aylesworth tries to fit his voiceless mouthings to a grand opera gramophone record.

The second-night audience appeared to like the play, which never lags in action. Some may consider it silly, for we are a frightfully self-conscious people, afraid of being laughed at for laughter ill-timed. The same critic who set down "Kiss Me Quick" as "an awful thing" wrote of John Drew's "Much Ado" revival:

The low comedy of Shakespeare, save when it is amazingly well done, is rather dubious stuff for the delectation of the modern generation.

PATRIOTIC HIPPODROME PAGEANTRY

It has been said—and no doubt Mr. Bartholomae stands ready to believe it—that critics find it easier to damn than to praise a show. One of them remarked to me once, at a Hippodrome dress rehearsal, that he found this entertainment the most difficult to write about in his whole list. In closing his account of "America," this year's wonder at the big playhouse, another reviewer exclaims:

It's a marvelous show; but, thank Heaven, we sha'n't have to write about it again for another year. It's too strenuous an undertaking for any one pen!

Possibly the child's will be the only voice raised in protest against "America," as it contains no clowns; but children are such grown-up mortals these days that one can scarcely blame managers for cutting out the white-faced antic-throwers.

The new piece lives up to its name, starting with an ingeniously contrived American flag effect in chorus groupings at the railway-station, and ending with an assemblage of the various State emblems in the Court of Honor, when the chords of "The Star-Spangled Banner" actually succeed in bringing that iceberg proposition, a New York audience, to its feet. That it is not necessary to sit down again is beside the mark.

One really has cause to feel proud of the Hippodrome. Since the London resort of the name has discarded its ring, abolished its tank, and gone in for rag-time, there is no other place of entertainment to be compared with the Manhattan home of thrills. "America" possesses a genuine one in the

plunge of an automobile with four passengers from a cliff into the water. Moreover, this season, dozens of girls not only march down into the deep pool, but march out again and stretch themselves to dry almost within hand-clasp of the people in the front row.

After all, the Hippodrome's biggest cards are the clever grouping of its color schemes, the movement of vast bodies of men and women, and the swift changes, in complete darkness, from scene to scene. Among the most effective of the latter is the silent one showing a lighted, four-funnel steamer passing at night through the Culebra Cut of the Panama Canal. Credit for making these shifts so smoothly should go to the Hippodrome's new resident stage-director, William G. Stewart, who used to sing leading rôles with the Castle Square Opera Company. Like other recent Hippodrome shows, "America" was invented by Arthur Voegtlin, and its songs were written by Manuel Klein, whose "Mr. Soldier Man" and "The Girl in the Gingham Gown" are the catchiest in this year's lot.

ANOTHER LIVE DEAD MAN

Why should we worry because plays sometimes resemble one another? With such a multitudinous output of new pieces, it is sure to happen now and then. And, after all, the surprise in "The Temperamental Journey" is not that it is so similar to "The Great Adventure," but so different from it, considering the fact that both plays are based on the same idea—the supposed death of a painter, and the increased value of his pictures after his reported demise.

In this department for July I recorded my impressions of the play made by Arnold Bennett from his novel, "Buried Alive," after witnessing the performance in London. "The Temperamental Journey," produced at the Belasco in New York in early September, is conspicuously programmed as having been adapted by Leo Ditrichstein from the French comedy, "Pour Vivre Heureux," brought out at the Renaissance, Paris, on the 16th of January, 1912. The fact that it provides Mr. Ditrichstein with a part distantly related to that of the composer in "The Concert" is quite sufficient to have suggested its importation to Mr. Belasco.

The hero, *Jacques Dupont*, is an artist who paints according to his own ideas, and

sells only intermittently. Moreover, he is nagged to desperation by a wife already infatuated with *Neil*, a painter who follows the popular taste; so *Dupont* determines to end it all by drowning himself. But he forgets that he knows how to swim, and at the critical moment, the instinct of self-preservation being stronger than the suicidal intent, he strikes out and is finally picked up by a yacht bound for Halifax, whence he does not return for two weeks. Meanwhile his hat and coat, the latter containing the farewell note he has left for his wife, are found on the beach, and a little later a body is picked up which is buried as *Dupont's*. Reporters flock to the scene, and art-dealers vie with one another to pay big prices for his pictures.

Jacques turns up on the day of the funeral, and is about to stop the proceedings when he sees his wife in *Neil's* arms and decides to "stay dead." The last act brings him back to New York from France as a dealer in *Dupont* pictures which he has been painting; but when he finds that his wife's new husband has boldly signed the *Dupont* name to *Neil* products, he can stand it no more, and confronts the pair without his disguise.

The climax is somewhat incoherent, and is rendered more so by Mr. Ditrichstein's indistinct enunciation at this point; but a happy ending is indicated by the arrangements for a quiet divorce and for *Dupont's* prospective union with *Maria*, daughter of the Italian innkeeper—a rôle exquisitely played by Josephine Victor, lately the *Hen Pheasant* with Maude Adams in "Chantecler." Wonderful work, too, and especially brilliant in the funeral scene, is that of Isabel Irving as the self-centered *Delphine*.

While Ditrichstein has not such rich opportunities as fell to him in "The Concert," he has abundant chance for real pathos in the first act—the tempo of which, I must add, is a bit slow. The second act, with its mixture of farce and funeral, traverses some rather delicate ground; but here *Richie Ling* as *Dupont's* friend, and *Cora Witherspoon* as that friend's fiancée, help to save the situation from sagging over the border-line.

A FARCE FAST YET SPOTLESS

Speaking of border-lines, Cohan & Harris are advertising *Edgar Selwyn's* new farce, "Nearly Married," as keeping at a

safe distance from the debatable territory. No doubt they think this necessary, with such a title, in a season when the police are getting after the red lights in the white slave plays.

"Boisterously funny, but nary a blush," runs their slogan, and funny the piece surely is. Two recent Belasco players, Bruce McRae and Jane Grey, enact a husband and wife on the verge of a divorce. At the end of the first act they fall into each other's arms and decide to start on a second honeymoon in an automobile. But the separation proceedings have gone farther than they realize, and the final decree, granting the wife an absolute separation, arrives after they have left. This strikes consternation into some of the bride's friends, who start in pursuit of the couple in the hope of averting a scandal. They all meet at an up-State inn, whose crafty proprietor draws custom by strewing broken bottles in the paths of motor-cars.

You may wonder how "Nearly Married" can be truthfully exploited as a "pure farce" with a professional correspondent figuring prominently in the cast, and the locking up of ill-assorted couples in the same room—a device dear to the Paris Palais Royal—of frequent occurrence. But rest assured, the proprieties come off unscathed, and the Gaiety Theater again lives up to its title, which it has continued to deserve more consistently, perhaps, than any other playhouse in town, except possibly the Casino, where one may always count on finding musical comedy.

"ON WITH THE DANCE"

"Lieber Augustin" is the Casino's opening attraction for the current season. Whether it will attract for long is doubtful, despite the herculean efforts put forth by De Wolf Hopper, to whom it falls this year, instead of going to Sam Bernard last season. When I wrote about it in September, 1912, Bernard, with his broken English, was talked of as the star for New York. By waiting twelve months the Shuberts secured Hopper and his distinct enunciation, together with George MacFarlane, likewise of the Gilbert & Sullivan revivals. Mr. MacFarlane is featured, no doubt as per contract; but if the vote of the audiences were taken, I feel certain that this honor would go to Roszika Dolly, whose dancing is a delight.

Here's a tip for the managers. Just now

the public is wild about dancing. Why not bring out a musical play in which dances, rather than songs, predominate? This scheme would possess the added advantage of giving the critics less chance to kick about a stupid libretto. Provided with a reasonably clever company, the theater where a dance show goes into the bill will not need to change it for the remainder of the winter. While the principals were resting, the chorus might fill in with catchy ensemble numbers of the type of "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," and "Sentimental Tommy."

As a leading member of such a cast I nominate at once Grace Field, the *Anna* of "Lieber Augustin," for she can both dance and sing with great acceptability, and possesses a vivacity that never fails. Last year she danced with Donald MacDonald in the most attractive numbers of "The Red Petticoat."

The prima donna rôle in "Lieber Augustin" is sung by May de Sousa, from Chicago *via* London and Paris, where she appeared with Gaby Deslys. I should add that the music of "Augustin" is by—you could almost guess, his name now stares at you so frequently from bill-boards—Leo Fall, of Vienna. After Sullivan, he is something of a drop.

THE BEST OF "SWEETHEARTS"

In the springtime, we are told, young men's fancies lightly turn to thoughts of sweethearts. By a reversal of the process, I fear that in "Sweethearts" Christie MacDonald's memory will revert longingly to "The Spring Maid."

This is not to imply that her new operetta is not in many respects charming. Victor Herbert's music is of a high order, and the supporting company was obviously picked for its abilities irrespective of individual reputations—always a gratifying feature to note. But the book is a hopeless muddle, and one turns helplessly from an attempt to figure out its whys and wherefores to laugh at Tom McNaughton's antics as a laundryman and enjoy the fine singing of the star, as well as that of Thomas Conkey and Edwin Wilson.

Miss MacDonald need have little fear of rivalry. There is no star in the musical heavens at all resembling her type, and in "Sweethearts" she possesses a vehicle which, if not a critics' "knockout," is at least an offering of whose tone she has no

cause to be ashamed, while musically it may rank with the best of its class.

MONEY AND THE WIFE

With the enormous number of theaters now operating in Manhattan, the autumn openings come so thickly that the luckless reviewer cannot see all the plays as they are brought out, but is often compelled to postpone a hearing until he can find a vacant evening. Sometimes he misses a piece altogether, as not a few of them die young.

An instance in point is "Where Ignorance Is Bliss," a comedy from the Hungarian by the man who wrote "The Devil." It lasted only ten nights at the Lyceum, and from all accounts may be said to have died from attenuated tissues—in other words, it did not give the public two dollars' worth.

John Drew found so little doing at the box-office for "Much Ado" that in three weeks' time he side-tracked Shakespeare for a Haddon Chambers revival plus a new Barrie playlet. And judging from the size of the audience, it is lucky I caught up with "Her Own Money" when I did.

Here is a play by Mark E. Swan that I should call half a success, not reckoned from the measure of its popularity, but literally. The first act and a half out of the three entrap the attention with sure grip. After that the author's postulate fails to carry, and we grow angry with the characters because they obey so implicitly the puppet strings that pull them.

The *Aldens* live comfortably, but modestly, in a New York apartment. *Mary Alden* wants a home and chickens in the country. She saves here and there in the household expenditures and denies herself fine clothes until she has two thousand dollars put away in the bank. Then comes a crisis in her husband's business. He needs money to tide him over, but *Mary* fears to make the loan herself lest, she being only his wife, he will not regard it as a strictly business transaction, so will not pay it back. She thereupon calls in a neighbor across the hall, passes the money over to him, and requests him to make the loan.

All goes well up to the point where the loan is paid back, when the neighbor's jealous wife sees her husband making out a check to *Mrs. Alden*. Merely to oblige the playwright, *Mary* puts off the simple explanation so long that the audience loses

all conviction in her and the play, and the live chicks in the last act arouse only a flutter of the expiring interest.

It may be added that "Her Own Money" is so well played that it is a pity to see such clever acting bestowed upon a piece which scarcely deserves it.

SLOW FARCE AND A SWIFT ONE

In the attempt to get as far away as possible from the banging doors and improper females of typical French farce, the makers of the American brand have of late persistently worked the soil of the wild and woolly West. We had it already this season in "Believe Me, Zantippe," and we have it again in "Who's Who?" written by Richard Harding Davis for William Collier. In each case the same fault glares at us: the hero is such an impossible milksop that we have no patience with him.

Last year, in "Never Say Die," Collier did things; in "Who's Who?" he is merely afraid of the things that may be done to him. In the emergency, and this being an age of revivals, I suggest to Mr. Collier that he should emulate John Drew and dig back into the past. And let him go back as far, too, as that other farce this same Richard Harding Davis did for him—"The Dictator," one of the finest vehicles that ever carried any star to gold and glory.

In "Madam President," from the French of Hennequin and Veber, we have banging doors a plenty and one female improper enough to demoralize an entire police force. Charles Dillingham has secured the piece for Fannie Ward, who thereby achieves the success she has been seeking, lo, these three seasons past.

The French are certainly masters at deft farce construction. "Madam President" is a brilliant example of their work, and will doubtless be on view at the Garrick for the entire season. And I am positive that it will do less harm to those who see it than such plays as "Arsène Lupin" and "Raffles," where the sympathies of the audience are enlisted on the side of the criminal from the very outset.

Fannie Ward is absolutely at home as a French actress turned out of a hotel by the president of the town and seeking refuge in that very individual's own home, where she is mistaken for his wife by his superior from Paris. W. J. Ferguson puts over fine work as chief attendant to the minister of justice, and John W. Dean is excellent as

that same minister, who falls in love with *Gallipaux's* supposed wife, and in the end hands the sop to the proprieties by marrying her. An exquisite bit is that of the clerk, anxious to get away to a wedding, and kept busy by his superior shifting the place of *Gallipaux's* appointment until finally the worm turns and the hitherto meek underling throws up his job with an outburst that electrifies. This rôle is handled by George Brennan with just the right touches of light and shade.

The whole play is funny, extremely funny, with more droll situations to the square minute than your "Who's Who?" and "Xantippe" supply in their whole, two hours' traffic.

A SUCCESSFUL PLAYWRIGHT'S HARDSHIPS

Playwright Bayard Veiller surely has a sorry time of it. When big success came to him with "Within the Law," he had already disposed of the rights for a lump sum, so he looked to his next production to reap the reward for years of waiting and struggle. "The Fight," brought out in late August, had a reception that appeared to promise him this, but in early September it was stopped by order of the police, who objected to the business carried on by the "madam" of a red-furnished apartment in the second act.

"Very well, then," said Veiller, "we'll cut out the second act," and he forthwith wrote in some six minutes more of explanatory dialogue for Act III, after which the play was allowed to proceed. If this accepted revision appeared to present the police department critics as having more regard for the eye than for the ear of the public, it was no concern of Veiller's, who, in any case, was told by one of the reviewers, after the first night, that his original second act was useless. So perhaps, after all, the only person with a real grievance in the premises is Cora Adams, who played the "madam" so faithfully in the discarded scene that she now finds herself out of a job.

For a play in which politics is the main theme "The Fight" is uncommonly interesting. This may be due to the fact that a woman is the personage chiefly concerned. She is the leading banker in the Western town her father founded; and, in order to clean it up, she decides to run for mayor. Thereupon ensues the fight between her side and the forces of evil. There must be

a considerable exaggeration of facts in the presentment, but Mr. Veiller certainly succeeds in what after all was no doubt his prime motive—holding the interest of the audience tense. And in this he has been nobly aided and abetted by his wife, Margaret Wycherley, who is completely convincing as the much beset *Jane Thomas*.

THE PLAY WITH A SHOCK-ABSORBER

Owen Davis is the man who once made the flesh of the "ten, twent', and thirt'" patrons creep with the thrills he put into crude melodrama. Now he is sending home two-dollar patrons of "The Family Cupboard" to tell themselves that "Sappho" was teacup-and-saucer drama compared with this raw story of the son who falls in love with the chorus-girl his father has been keeping in a flat up-town.

But the playgoing public has been so educated up—or is it down?—to seeing loose living depicted back of the footlights that it now seems to be taken quite as a matter of course. Thus doth familiarity with vice breed indifference to the spectacle of it. Who was it said that if man had never worn clothes there would have been no immorality?

Of course "The Family Cupboard" aims to point a moral, but few sinning fathers in the audience are likely to lay it to heart and give up the girl. Rather, they are apt to think what a fool *Charles Nelson* was for admitting his guilt so readily when charged with it by his son, acted with grim faithfulness by Forrest Winant, remembered for his capital *Country Boy*. I am bound to admit that Mr. Davis seeks to supply a shock-absorber in the person of the vaudeville chap—a part with which Franklyn Ardell gathered the same sort of laurels as did Frank Craven in "Bought and Paid For." The two rôles are altogether different, but slang and self-assurance are the salient features of both.

Mr. Brady is advertising seats for "The Family Cupboard" at the Playhouse (shades of "Little Women"!) up to New Year's Day, but I think something else will be on the boards there—possibly before Thanksgiving.

WHY LONDON WORRIES

Under the heading, "The Sick Theater," the London *Observer* recently summed up the appalling situation of drama in England. And the remedy proposed by the

writer, who signs himself "C. H.," is just as appalling. He suggests that the managers should give the people quantity rather than quality. Or rather, he argues that is what they seem to want, judging by the patronage extended to the picture-houses and the music-halls.

"The public, in fact," he sums up, "wants the theater, but it wants it cheap. And cheap it must become—else the big public will do without it."

Of a similar opinion on this side of the water is Philip Bartholomae, who moved "When Dreams Come True" from the Lyric to the Forty-Fourth Street Theater and inaugurated a dollar-fifty rate for the best seats.

"I have a theory," he declared, "that when the cost of necessities goes up, the cost of luxuries must come down, and certainly theatrical entertainments are luxuries."

Harking back to Great Britain, the London *Stage*, under the heading "Wanted, Plays," takes issue with the *Observer* and demands:

Of what avail are cheap prices if there is an insufficient supply of the articles to be sold?

If it is the home-made article the *Stage* seeks, it may well join the *Observer* in lamentations, for in early September the boards of seven West End houses were showing productions that first saw the light in New York, while such a reliable native dramatist as Sir James Barrie had just put forward his first fiasco.

This, announced as "The Legend of Leonora," to be played on this side by Maude Adams, had its name changed at the last minute in London to "The Adored One," and was presented with Mrs. Patrick Campbell and Sir John Hare in the cast.

In the September forecast I expressed surprise that Miss Adams could be expected to follow Mrs. Campbell in the same part, but the rôle of *Leonora* itself proves to be so astounding that nothing could amaze one after hearing its requirements. She is a woman endowed with such strong mother love that she pushes a man out of a railway carriage to his death simply because he refuses to have the window closed and her little daughter has a cold.

Can you imagine what treatment a play on such a theme would have received in

any manager's office had it been handed in by an unknown? As it is, there was such dissatisfaction expressed on the opening night that one of the three acts was promptly cut out.

Of the American showings a favorable reception was extended to "The Scarlet Band" (the London name for "The Conspiracy") with Marie Doro as the heroine. Of her performance one critic wrote:

Both as the fugitive in the first act and as the girl who hears her story reproduced by her employer in the second, this appealing and wistful actress quite lifted the piece above ordinary detective drama.

"Joseph and His Brethren" at His Majesty's, with Sir Herbert Tree as *Jacob*, Maxine Elliott for *Potiphar's* wife, and George Relph (the sworder here in "Kismet") as *Joseph*, seems to have made a success of scenery, while "Years of Discretion" apparently has made no success at all. When will our managers learn that London will have none of our society plays because the man in the street over there can't imagine us as having any society?

After the pæans of praise lavished on their play in Chicago and New York, it must have come as a cold douche to Mr. and Mrs. Locke to read London comments such as this:

"Years of Discretion" has no real feeling, no reticence, no finesse. It is tawdry, inconsequent, and more than a little coarse.

WHEN PAUL ARMSTRONG BACKS HIMSELF

If our managers keep on presenting these so-called dramas of reform, the newspapers will have to find new headings for the advertising columns that announce them. "Amusement" is scarcely the proper classification for a play like "The Escape," for example. This is Paul Armstrong's attack on poverty, which he would appear to regard as the greatest crime in the calendar. It is likewise the poorest play he has written, not even excepting "Society and the Bulldog," which went down to failure at Daly's some five years ago. It is a significant fact, by the way, that all Armstrong's worst plays are produced by himself.

Not only is "The Escape" one of Armstrong's poor plays, it is also extremely badly acted, except for three out of the eleven persons. Can it be that the author-producer skimmed on the cast in order to lavish on the tall letters spelling out "By

Paul Armstrong" which blink at one from two sides of the electric sign in front of the theater?

In an interview three years since Mr. Armstrong stated that Charles Frohman once promised to produce a play of his if he would write one in which the leading lady could appear during the third act in men's evening dress. What Armstrong should do now, with his present leading lady, is to write a play which will enable that young lady to get along without doing any acting at all. In justice to Helen Ware, who created the part in Chicago last winter, I wish to state that she left the company long ago.

ANOTHER WINNER FOR THE CLEANS

The ingenuity of the idea is the best thing about "Seven Keys to Baldpate." This being my impression of the play, I cannot agree with those—and there are many of them—who go about proclaiming this to be the cleverest work George Cohan has turned out. Yet I can easily understand how critics may come away blinded by the deliciously rounded out finish of the thing.

To explain this finish to those who expect to see the play would be to rob them of its chief delight, that of surprise, for it is a mystery farce of the first water. And almost all who read this will have an opportunity to see "Seven Keys to Baldpate" for, although in my opinion its slow tempo and lack of variety put it clear behind "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," it is a great big hit, and I shouldn't be surprised to see two more companies playing it before snow flies, even if George Cohan himself and Douglas Fairbanks must be pressed into service to head them. Wallace Eddinger in the present cast is "all to the good" as the young novelist writing a book on a wager in twenty-four hours at a summer hotel in the depth of winter.

Great credit—and I trust a big slice of the royalties—should go to Earl Derr Biggers for writing such an original story in the first place. Cohan & Harris are to be congratulated, too, on having the courage to break away from the convention forbidding the two-act form to anything but musical comedy.

"Seven Keys to Baldpate" is long enough to stand cutting in its early stages, and when this is done, and the action quickened throughout, the farce will be

quite deserving of the high praise heaped on it. The novel itself no doubt will have an enormous sale. But by all means read it after, not before, taking in the play, which is another winner for the cleans in this season of so much muck.

ENDURING CHARM OF "ROB ROY"

While discriminating patrons of the drama are already, even so early in the season, beginning to feel their spirits droop, music lovers have every reason to be in high feather. Grand opera in English, at theater prices, has opened auspiciously at the Century, a fitting home for it. An idea of the repertoire to be given may be gleaned from the bills for the first three weeks—"Aida," "Gioconda," and "Tales of Hoffmann." A straw in the wind indicative of the interest in opera in English is the comparatively small interest manifested in the one night's performance of a work in the original language.

The De Koven Opera Company has followed its revival of "Robin Hood" with one of "Rob Roy." Produced originally at the Herald Square about nineteen years ago, time cannot stale the big appeal in such songs as "My Hame Is Where the Heather Blooms" and "Dearest Heart of My Heart." And with such artists as Bessie Abott (starred as *Flora*) Henriette Wakefield, Frank Pollock, and Herbert Waterous to sing them, one can the more readily forgive—and forget—Harry B. Smith's atrocious book. Even the very inanities of this—made the most of by Jefferson de Angelis—have their uses in causing us to realize how much less of the slapstick we get in musical shows than was the custom when "Rob Roy" was a novelty.

The revival is staged with infinite care—except for the water-wheel in the second act, which blithely revolves in the wrong direction—and there is no stinting in the way of scenery, costumes, people, or properties. Yet I could easily dispense with some of the drums that drown big slices of Ralph Brainard's spirited march song.

Now that England, Scotland, and Ireland have all served their turn as back-grounds for light opera, why does not Mr. De Koven, or somebody else, take up Wales? Surely both the picturesque country and the Welsh people, the lustiest singers in the world, should furnish an inspiring theme.

Matthew White, Jr.

LIGHT VERSE

A HALLOWE'EN PRAYER

HALLOWE'EN! Oh, Hallowe'en!
Night when spirits that have been
Dance all gaily on the green!
Bring, I pray thee, unto me
Glimpses of the things to be
In the vast futurity!

Bring me not the ghosts of yore!
I have seen them all before,
In a fair and goodly store.
One and all, day after day,
These old ghosts flit o'er my way,
Smiling, dancing, blithe, and gay.

Well I know the old-time things—
Memory each item brings,
And the echo sweetly rings.
Now the future I would know—
Is it bliss or is it wo
That my cup will overflow?

Is it joy or sad regret
That my pathway will beset?
Is my love to be Janette,
Alice, Maude, or lovely Prue,
Gentle Jane or simple Sue,
Chloe or Priscilla true?

Prithee let thy specter say
Which of these will answer "Yea"
When I seek my wedding-day?
Answer quickly to my call,
Fair autumnal festival,
For I vow I love them all!

John Kendrick Bangs

STUDIES IN NATURAL HISTORY

THE COMMUTER (*Semiurbanus Migrans*)

THIS species is a creature very
Mysterious and extraordinary;
His way of life is queer, erratic,
Singular, idiosyncratic.

His Habitat is towns by day,
But in the evening chill and gray
By train or trolley he will creep
To rural neighborhoods to Sleep.

He's fond of Nature; that is why
He slumbers where mosquitoes fly;
It seems then twenty thousand pities
This nature-lover Lives in Cities.

In winter, while it still is Night
He gets up, shivering, strikes a light,
Gulps coffee, shakes the Furnace down,
And races to the train for Town.

When night returns, he leaves paved streets,
Swept walks, bright lights, and good steam-
heats,
And makes for rural slush and mire,
Darkness, and feeble furnace-fire

In summer he's in bed by nine,
For late hours won't with work combine;
He rises, ere the day is hot,
To hoe and weed his Garden Plot;

Then leaves the country fresh and sweet,
And seeks the city's dust and heat,
Wherein he bitterly must pine
For his suburban Bed at Nine!

Thus the Commuter lives his span,
Not country and not city man;
For daily torture, constant, grim,
Old Tantalus has naught on him!

George Jay Smith

QUID PRO QUO

THE GIRL

"YOU say that I to you impart
An inspiration. Let me see
The proof of that—some work of art
Compose for me!"

THE ARTIST

"A work of art most wondrous fair
My answering evidence shall be;
Will you this one condition dare—
Come pose for me!"

Frederick Moxon

THE WISE LOVER

WHEN Daphne frowns on me, and doth
become
A trouble deep and dire, all full of sorrow,
I do not mope about it, sadly dumb,
And tamely put off action till to-morrow.
I whisper in her ear sweet words of peace
About a love her temper fierce redoubles;
And while of course she struggles for release,
I show her how a wise man hugs his
troubles.

When she doth rage, dissolving into tears
Whose flow becomes a saline stream tor-
rential,
I don't give way to apprehensive fears
Of what a tear may be in wo potential.
I smiling sit and gaze into those eyes,
Despite their evidence of her repining,
And show her how the sea of sorrow dries
Whene'er the sun of love is truly shining.

When from her lips there falls a stream of
words
So heated that it sets all things afire,
Her senses wild as mad stampeding herds,
I ne'er retort with corresponding ire.
I don't give way to speeches all profane,
But on those lips that hotly oriflamme it
I place my own, and show her, in her pain,
How one small kiss can take that stream
and dam it!

Blakeney Gray

THE BACHELOR'S THANKSGIVING

A YEAR has gone over my head
Since I thanked for my victuals and bed,
For my health and my looks, for my pipe and
my books,
My prunes, my porridge, my bread.

So I open my mouth once more,
And give thanks as I gave them before
For my shoes and my vest, my shirts and the
rest,
And my neckties and buttons galore.

I'm as thankful as thankful can be
That I am a he, not a she;
And I'm thankful 'way down from my toe to
my crown
That no one has yet married me!

H. R. Macaulay

PARENTAL SHORTCOMINGS

I'M very fond of ma, of course,
She always does her duty;
The table's fair, the house shows care
And even signs of beauty.
She really dresses very well,
In keeping with her station;
But *entre nous*, I'll just tell you—
Her French pronunciation!

Pa's rather handsome, on the whole,
With hair that's full and waving,
Extremely kind, although inclined
To be a little saving.
Still, I've no reason to complain,
Or use on him my hammer;
But in your ear—that's right, come near—
His slips in English grammar!

One's parents fill a place in life,
And that there's no denying;
Their lack would be undoubtedly
A hardship sad and trying.
But granted all that may be said
About their love and rarity,
They call upon a daughter, son,
For lots of Christian charity!

William Wallace Whitlock

TWINS

ONE day when we were tired of all
Our sports and usual games,
Jim put on my clothes, I wore his,
And then we swapped our names.
Folks can't tell which is which, so Jim
He went to school as me,
And I said, "Here!" when he was called,
As solemn as could be.

We did this one whole week, and dad
Did not catch on a bit;
But mother saw our trick right off,
And wasn't fooled by it.
She never even mixed us once!
Now how do you suppose
She told us twins apart? It's queer
The things your mother knows!

Mazie V. Caruthers

LOOKING FORWARD

WE'RE dancing now the bunny hug,
That is, the folks who dare—
The tango and the turkey trot,
And naughty grizzly bear;
But, gazing down the polished floors,
A vision comes to me,
Of couples reeling to and fro
In dances yet to be;

Sheep shuffle, hen hop,
Romper into view;
Duck waddle, goose glide,
Cat shindy, too.

Across my mental looking-glass
The giddy dancers sweep,
Some sliding nimbly on their ears,
Some rolling in a heap;
Terpsichorean lunatics
Who soon will learn to tread
A light fantastic measure on
The elbow or the head!

Worm wriggle, coon flop,
Pig pirouette;
Look ahead a little way—
Worse is coming yet!

Minna Irving

THE COURTING OF MISS PARKINA

BY OLIVE M. BRIGGS

MISS PARKINA was a business woman. She was twenty-seven years old. She lived in an apartment by herself. She liked men, and she hated cats. She was not pretty, but if you took her in parts—well, it was better, on the whole, not to take her in parts.

In fact, it was rather difficult to take Miss Parkina at all, because she generally took you first. She swallowed you with a glance of her eye, and from that moment you spent the rest of the interview wondering what she had thought of you. You blushed and hoped; but the removal of the eye-glasses from her nose settled it. She thought nothing of you at all! You were not even worth a second look.

The eye-glasses were distinctly becoming. It was a pity that she used them only on people. When she sat at her desk in the private room at the end of the long office, they generally dangled from a hook in her blouse and went *clink, clink*, when she stooped over the waste-paper basket in the corner.

So many things went into that waste-paper basket—circulars, begging letters, speculating offers, little polite notes, long notes that weren't polite. It was wonderful, the knack she had of always knowing the things to go in and the things to stay out!

Miss Parkina was Sasson's private secretary. She knew everything he did, and a little more.

"Miss Parkina, do you happen to remember where that list of the D. and R.—"

"In that right-hand pigeonhole."

"You couldn't put your finger on those estimates, Miss Parkina?"

Certainly she could put her finger on them.

"The middle drawer, Mr. Sasson."

"Now, where in the devil—"

"Next to the bottom, Mr. Sasson; next to the bottom!"

"What? The devil!"

"Weren't you looking for the register of—"

"I was, Miss Parkina; but how the—"

"Well, it's next to the bottom."

Sasson used to boast of his private secretary.

"There's not another like her in Wall Street—no, sir, there is not! If I should mislay my little finger, she'd know. The people that come here to my office! Why, my life wouldn't be worth a tuppenny button! She sees them, and handles them like a general."

"Any particular sense in that fat man having an interview with me?" I say. "G. Spence! Don't know him, Miss Parkina."

"Vice-president of the S. P. and Q.," says she. "I'd see him, Mr. Sasson."

"So I see him—wouldn't have missed him for anything, either! A ten-thousand-dollar stroke of business!"

Another story that Sasson told was of the time when she turned down Richard Grant. It seems that she brought in Grant's card.

"Of course I'll see him," said Sasson.

"Just finish up the letter, Miss Parkina." She put on her glasses.

"There's no hurry," she said. "He's gone."

"Gone! You let him go?"

"Certainly. It was about that yacht dinner. I told him you had a particularly important case this morning. If he would come back—"

"Well, Miss Parkina?"

"I told him you had three engagements for that evening, however, and it would be no use."

"That's so, Miss Parkina; that's so. I was wondering how I'd get out of that dinner. Three engagements? That's so. Are they down?"

Miss Parkina removed her glasses and took up her pen.

"They are in the book, Mr. Sasson. 'In the last proceeding—'"

"In the last proceeding—"

II

EVERYBODY in New York knew Sasson. The Street knew him, the Stock Exchange knew him, the bar knew him. The young clerks nudged one another as he passed in the lobby. People in outgoing steamers pointed out his big naphtha launch as it sped down the river to his offices. His automobile left a trail of admiring gazers in its wake. His private car—

B. Sasson, he was a great man. Everybody in Europe and America had heard of him; but his secretary was still greater, although she was a woman, and nobody had ever heard of her.

She was so great that Sasson began to feel a little uncomfortable about it. After all, who was running his office? Who ran the exchange, the bar, even the Street, as it approached him? He even suspected—of course it was only a suspicion, but still—

"Miss Parkina, I don't understand how those bonds—"

"I exchanged them, sir."

"The Beeting bonds! Why, they're worth—they're going up!"

"They won't be going up next week, sir."

"The deuce they won't!"

"Next week, Mr. Sasson, that Dewer stock will be worth fifteen points more."

"I don't like it, Miss Parkina."

"You will like it next week, sir."

"You have a wonderful instinct, to be sure, Miss Parkina; but still it is my stock!"

"I hope so, Mr. Sasson. Will you continue the brief, sir?"

Mr. Sasson was telling this story to his friend.

"What happened?" asked his friend.

Mr. Sasson wrinkled up his eyebrows with a quizzical smile.

"The girl's a witch," he said. "Talk about my business ability! The only trouble is, who is head, she or I?"

"If you want to get rid of her—"

"Not at all!" said Mr. Sasson. "She has offers every month or so. I've had to raise her salary by jumps, as it is. Jove! If she should go!"

"You couldn't find anything," suggested his friend.

"The office would stop," said Mr. Sasson; "but if I should go—"

His friend laughed.

"I can't raise her salary much more," said Mr. Sasson thoughtfully. "Pretty soon it will be higher than my own. That fellow Lurman is bidding against me."

"He wants her?"

"He's bound to have her!"

"Let her go."

"Let her go to his office? Why, it would ruin me! She handles the key to every transaction I have. The things I forget myself, she knows. That girl's in the inside, I tell you. She knows it, and I know it, and Lurman knows it, too. If she went to him! She mustn't go to him, not if it takes every cent I have."

His friend whistled softly.

"If I were you, Sasson," he said, "I'd—why, I'd—I'd marry her."

"By Jove!" said Sasson. "That would settle Lurman!"

"She wouldn't stay in the office, either."

"By Jove!" said Sasson.

"And yet you wouldn't lose her."

"I'll do it, by Jupiter, I'll do it!"

"And you would be head."

"No," said Sasson; "she would, but I'll do it!"

III

It was the next day but one after this when the courting began. Miss Parkina was serenely unaware. The chair behind her squeaked oftener than usual, but she had no nerves.

"I will tell Tommy to oil it," she said to herself.

Mr. Sasson took frequent glimpses of the back of his secretary's head. He had never noticed it particularly before, any more than he would notice the back of a machine.

It was a glossy head. Miss Parkina wore combs and a trifling pompadour just visible at the side. Her back was neat and straight. When she bent to drop begging letters and circulars into the trash-basket, she did it with ease and grace. Her pen ran rapidly over the paper. She was self-possessed; she never hurried.

"Miss Parkina!"

"Mr. Sasson."

"I'd like that letter written to—to John Brooks—about—"

"I wrote it this morning."

"Did you make the check out?"

"Certainly. That was what it was about."

"Oh! Well, send the estimate as well."

"I enclosed the estimate."

Mr. Sasson squeaked his chair again.

"Hang it all!" he said. "How am I to make her look around? Miss Parkina!"

"Mr. Sasson."

"Would you mind coming here? I want to go over those books with you."

"I must certainly speak to Tommy," said Miss Parkina.

"What did you say, Miss Parkina?"

"I am coming, Mr. Sasson. I was just remarking how your chair squeaked."

"Sit here, please," said Sasson.

He got a good look at her nose and mouth. She was adjusting her glasses, so he had the opportunity.

"Why, I'm blessed if her hair doesn't curl," he said to himself. "She has a turned-up nose! Yes, Miss Parkina—the second column."

"It comes out sixty-nine thousand three hundred and thirty-four," she said. "What did you make it?"

"She has a dimple—no, two," went on the summing up inside the chief's brain. "I made it sixty-nine thousand two hundred and thirty-four."

"I think you made a mistake," said Miss Parkina. "I went over it myself this morning."

"I am not accustomed to making mistakes," said Sasson, becoming himself again. "Go over it again, if you please."

His tone was a little masterful.

"Wouldn't it be better to go over it together?" said Miss Parkina.

He put his elbow on the table beside hers, and they both bent their heads. He might be masterful as much as he pleased, she had her way. He felt this.

"Don't you see?" he snapped. "Two hundred and thirty-four, just as I said."

"Three hundred," said Miss Parkina.

"Two hundred!"

"Nine and twelve make twenty-one, and twelve more thirty-three."

"It doesn't!"

"Why, of course it does," said Miss Parkina, with her eyes wide open.

Sasson looked at them. They were gray eyes with yellow spots in them. There was a little pink ridge on her nose, where the glasses rested. Her mouth was puckered up. It was a very decided mouth. He looked at the mouth.

"Don't you see, Mr. Sasson?"

"Twelve and nine make twenty-three. No, I don't see, Miss Parkina."

It was a pretty mouth.

She looked at him indignantly.

"The truth is, Miss Parkina," he said,

"I wasn't thinking about the figures."

"Evidently," she said.

"I was thinking—has that fellow been to you again?"

"Mr. Lurman? Yes, Mr. Sasson, he was here this morning."

"Would you mind telling me—"

"Certainly. He offered two hundred more."

"Oh!"

"I told him I hadn't decided."

"Oh!"

"I should have to think about it."

The mouth was pretty.

"What is it, Mr. Sasson?"

"What is what?"

"Have you finished the column? It was sixty-nine thousand three hundred and thirty-four, you see. I will go back to that—"

"Miss Parkina!"

"Yes, sir?"

"Miss Parkina, I wonder—er—if you could—"

"Yes, sir?"

"Thunder!" he said to himself. "If she'd only take off those glasses! I feel like a schoolboy."

"Yes, Mr. Sasson."

"I can't do it," he said. "Only about that list of stocks, Miss Parkina—do as you like about them."

"You rely on my judgment?"

"Oh, perfectly!"

"Then I shall buy—"

"All right. Miss Parkina!"

"Yes?"

"All right, buy—all right!"

"Except the Dunn stocks. I think we had better get rid of those."

"If you go to Lurman, Miss Parkina, who will attend to my stocks?"

"I have been wondering, Mr. Sasson."

"Who will take the estimates?"

"I have been—"

"I shall never find things."

"I know, Mr. Sasson."

"I shall have no one to advise me or to take risks on her own judgment."

Miss Parkina smiled, showing a row of very pretty, even, white teeth.

"Not risks, Mr. Sasson—not exactly risks."

"Risks," he said; "but they come out all right!"

Miss Parkina suddenly had three dimples. He counted them.

"I wish I could make her laugh," he said to himself. "I should like to—to—"

"The world," said Mr. Sasson aloud, "thinks it is all Sasson; but we know, you and I—"

There was a fourth dimple under the left eye. He bent nearer. There was, indeed! Miss Parkina's eyes were on the trash-basket.

"Strange," he said, "I never noticed it before!"

"What?" said Miss Parkina.

"If you go to Lurman—"

"I told you I hadn't decided."

"If you go—"

"Perhaps I won't go."

"What else can I offer you, Miss Parkina?"

"That has nothing to do with it," she said promptly. "I am interested in your affairs. If I stay, it is because Mr. Lurman's are not as interesting. I like business."

"You have a wonderful knack at it," said Sasson. His hand almost touched hers. "You have almost as much knack as—perhaps more!"

"Oh, no," she said. "You are the head, Mr. Sasson."

Sasson felt a little thrill running through him. Their hands were touching.

"Miss Parkina," he said, "there is only one other thing I could offer you, if you would stay." She moved her hand. "Don't move your hand! I could—don't move your hand, please!—I could offer you a partnership. We could be partners in business, and—for life, that would mean, of course!"

"That would mean," said Miss Parkina, "that I should be bound. I couldn't go to Mr. Lurman. I should be your secretary for—"

"For life!" said Sasson. "Only you wouldn't be my secretary."

"I don't like it," said Miss Parkina. "I hate to be bound."

"You would only be bound not to leave me, you know," said the great man. He spoke eagerly. "In everything else you would be free. You would be—"

"I should be head?" inquired the secretary.

She had dimples in her hand, too. What a fool he had been not to notice it!

"You can be anything you want," he

said. "Only—dear Miss Parkina, stay with me!"

IV

SHE drew her hand thoughtfully away and looked at the dimples. Then she looked at the trash-basket; then she glanced up at his collar. He knew it was straight. He was repeating, at intervals:

"Dear Miss Parkina!"

Presently she reached his eyes, and he noticed that the yellow spots in hers were dancing. A sudden gleam came into his own.

"Oh, be careful!" said Miss Parkina. "No, don't, Mr. Sasson, don't! Look at my eye-glasses!"

"I don't care a rap," said Sasson. "I always loved you. I adored you from the first moment you came into the office!"

"You have mused up this letter so," said Miss Parkina, "it will all have to be copied over again. Who's to be secretary now?"

"Not you!"

"Yes, I am. I'm to be secretary and partner and head and—"

"And run my stocks, Miss Parkina?"

"Yes."

"And draw my estimates?"

"Of course."

"And manage the exchange and the bar and the Street?"

"I did that before."

"The automobile and the yacht?"

"Certainly."

"And me?"

"Of course you."

"You will never leave me?"

"I suppose I can't."

"Will you write to Mr. Lurman?"

"I'll tell him I have another position."

"You have, indeed!"

"That I'm—engaged."

"You are!"

"To you."

"To me! Never mind the eye-glasses. What are you thinking about, with your mouth puckered up?"

"I was thinking what the clerks would say if they knew what was going on in the private office."

"No, you weren't. What was it?"

"I—to tell the truth, I was just wondering what you would have done if I had gone to Mr. Lurman. You couldn't have gotten on very well, could you, without me?"

"Dear me, yes! I should have engaged a new—"

"What did you ask me for, then?" she demanded.

Sasson stopped. What had he asked her for? He blushed.

"You would never have thought of it," she went on, "if it hadn't been for that other man trying to get me away. I knew it!"

He looked at her humbly.

"I will be frank with you," he said. "You see, to a business man, business comes first, I confess."

"I knew it," she said. "That's the reason I told you about him."

"Was it business with you too, then?" he demanded.

"Perhaps," said Miss Parkina. "You know, to a business woman—"

He stared at her.

"I don't believe it!" he said.

Then Mr. Sasson put out his masterful arms and they met around Miss Parkina. He kissed her dimples; he kissed her puckered mouth; he kissed the dancing yellow spots on her eyes; he kissed her curly hair.

"I don't care!" he cried. "I love you now. It may have been business before, I don't say it wasn't, but I love you now, and you—love me!"

"Now, you have upset the ink," said Miss Parkina breathlessly. "Of course, I

always loved you. It was your business instinct, at first, that fell in love with my business instinct. You didn't notice *me*—I mean the hair and eyes part—"

"Not at first," he admitted.

"I didn't notice your hair and eyes, either," she said. "I—well, I admired you. You see you were nearly always right."

"I know," he said. "That's the way I felt about you, too."

"Nearly always," she repeated; "and when you weren't, you needed me, and—well, then, I began. But you didn't begin until you heard about—er—Mr. Lurman."

"Miss Parkina," he said, "I began the moment I felt I couldn't live without you, and that's as soon as any one begins. If you had tried to leave me before, it would probably have begun before. I don't know. The only thing that I am sure of is that you are—you are bound—now!"

She laughed happily.

"Let me go—now," she said. "There is Bronson ringing."

"Some one to see Mr. Sasson, Miss Parkina."

"Mr. Sasson is engaged," said the secretary.

"They would like to see you, then."

"Miss Parkina is engaged," said the chief, eying him. "We are both engaged, Bronson—that's the fact! You can announce it in the office."

THE LOVER'S PHILOSOPHY

Oh, tell me not of azure skies
Or stars that light the deep,
(Cold stars that never weep!)
For what care I for starry *skies*
The while I see thine eyes?

Oh, tell me not that heavenly bliss
Shall crown me when I'm dead;
(When life and love are fled!)
For what care I for *heaven's* bliss
The while I feel thy kiss?

Nay, why should I look up or yon
Since thou art by my side?
Thy face my heaven to gaze upon;
Thy heart, where I abide,
Is all my world and paradise—
So tempt me not to rove
From thy dear lips and thy dear eyes,
The while I have thy love!

Constance Skinner

THE MAN BEHIND THE PEN

IN THESE DAYS, WHEN TECHNICAL SKILL IS SO COMMON, WHY
IS THERE SUCH A LACK OF GREAT WRITERS?

BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

AUTHOR OF "THE PSYCHOLOGY OF GOSSIP," "BLONDE VERSUS BRUNETTE," ETC.

BULWER'S deservedly famous phrase, "The pen is mightier than the sword," beneath its surface application, if you think it over, has this further suggestion to make to the believer in literature—that, as the sword is of no value as a weapon apart from the man that wields it, so, and no less so, is it with the pen. A mere pen, a mere sword—of what use are they, save as mural decorations, without a man behind them?

And that recalls a memory of mine, which, as both great men are now drinking wine in Valhalla out of the skulls of their critics, there can be no harm in recalling.

Some years ago I was on an unforgettable visit to Björnson, at his country home of Olestad, near Lillehammer. This is not the moment to relive that beautiful memory as a whole. All that is pertinent to my present purpose is a remark in regard to Ibsen that Björnson flashed out one day, shaking his great white mane with earnestness, his noble face alight with the spirit of battle. We had been talking of his possibly too successful attempt to sever Norway from Sweden, and Ibsen came in somehow incidentally.

"Ibsen," said he, "is not a man. He is only a pen."

There is no necessity to discuss the justice of the dictum. Probably, if ever there was a man behind a pen, it was Ibsen; but Ibsen's manhood concentrated itself entirely behind his pen, whereas Björnson's employed other weapons also, such as his gift of oratory, and was generally more dramatically in evidence. Björnson and Ibsen, as we know, did not agree on a number of things. Thus Björnson, like a human

being, was unjust. But his phrase was a useful one, and I am using it. It was misapplied to Ibsen; but, put in the form of a question, I know of no better single test to apply to writers, dead or alive, than—

"Is this a man? Or is it only a pen?"

Said Walt Whitman, in his familiar "So Long" to "Leaves of Grass":

Camerado, this is no book;
Who touches this touches a man.

And, of course, Walt was right about his own book, whether or not you like the man behind "Leaves of Grass" or not; but also that assertion of his might be chalked as a sort of customs "O. K." on all literary baggage whatsoever that has passed free into immortality. There is positively no writer that has withstood the searching examination of time, on whose book that final stamp of literary reality may not be placed. On every classic, time has scrawled ineffaceably:

This is no book;
Who touches this touches a man.

I raise the question of reality in literature in no merely academic spirit. For those who not only love books, but care for literature as a living thing, the question is a particularly live issue at the present time, when not only the quantity of writing is so enormous, but the average quality of it is so astonishingly good, when technique that would almost humble the masters, and would certainly dazzle them, is an accomplishment all but commonplace. At any rate, it is so usual as to create no special surprise. If people write at all, it is taken for granted, nowadays, that they write well.

And the number of people at the present time writing not only well, but wonderfully well, is little short of appalling.

In this, for those who ponder the phenomena of literature, there is less matter for congratulation than would seem likely at first sight. There is, indeed, no little bewilderment, and some disquietude. Confronted with short stories—and novels also, for that matter—told with a skill which makes the old masters of fiction look like clumsy amateurs; confronted, too, with a thousand poets—the number is scarcely an exaggeration—with accomplishments of meter and style that make some famous singers seem like clodhoppers of the muse, one is obliged to ask oneself:

"Are these brilliant writers really greater than those that went before?"

If for some reason, felt at first rather than defined, we answer no, we are forced to the conclusion that, after all, literature must be something more than a mere matter of writing. If so, we are constrained to ask ourselves, what is it?

TECHNICAL SKILL COMMON, GENIUS RARE

The men who deal with manuscripts—editors, publishers' readers, and publishers, men not only expert witnesses in regard to the printed literature of the day, but also curiously learned in the story of the book unborn, the vast mass of writing that never arrives at print—are even more impressed by what one might call the uncanny literary brilliance of the time. They are also puzzled by the lack of a certain something missing in work which otherwise possesses every namable quality of literary excellence. One of these, an editor with an eye as sympathetic as it is keen, told me of an instance to the point, typical of a hundred others.

He had been unusually struck by a story sent in to him by an unknown writer. It was, he told me, amazing from every purely literary point of view—plot, characterization, color, and economy of language. It had so much that it seemed strange that anything at all should be lacking. He sent for the writer, and told him just what he thought.

"But," he ended, after praise such as an editor seldom risks, "there is something the matter with it, after all. I wonder if you can tell me what it is."

The writer was, for a writer so flattered, strangely modest. All he could say, he

answered, was that he had done his best. The editor, agreeing that he certainly seemed to have done that, was all the more curious to find out how it was that a man who could do so well had not been able to add to his achievement the final "something" that was missing.

"What puzzles me," said the editor finally, "is that, with all the rest, you were not able to add—humanity. Your story seems to have been written by a wonderful literary machine, instead of by a man."

And, no doubt, the young story-writer went away sorrowful, in spite of the acceptance of his story—which, after all, was only lacking in all the writing of the day, save in that by one or two exceptional writers, who, by their isolation, the more forcibly point the moral.

MACHINE-MADE LITERATURE

A wonderful literary machine! The editor's phrase very nearly hits off the situation. As we have the linotype to set up the written words with a minimum of human agency, we really seem to be within measurable distance of a similar automaton that will produce the literature to be set up without the intrusion of any flesh-and-blood author. In this connection I may perhaps be permitted to quote a sentence or two from myself, written *à propos* a certain chameleonesque writer whose deservedly popular works are among the contemporary books that I most value:

A peculiar skill seems to have been developed among writers during the last twenty years—that of writing in the manner of some master, not merely with mimetic cleverness, but with genuine creative power. We have poets who write so like Wordsworth and Milton that one can hardly differentiate them from their masters; and yet—for this is my point—they are no mere imitators, but original poets, choosing, it would seem, some old mask of immortality through which to express themselves. In a different way from that of Guy de Maupassant they have chosen to suppress themselves, or rather, I should say, that, whereas De Maupassant strove to suppress, to eliminate, himself, their method is that of disguise.

In some respects they remind one of the hermit-crab, who annexes some beautiful ready-made house, instead of making one for himself. But then they annex it so brilliantly, with such delightful consequences for the reader, that not only is there no ground for complaint, but the reader almost forgets that the house does not really belong to them, and

that they are merely entertaining tenants on a short lease.

It is not that one is not grateful to writers of this type. Indeed one is. They not only provide us with genuine entertainment, but, by the skill born of their fine culture, they make us re-taste of the old masters in their brilliant variations. One has no complaint against them. Far from it. Only one wonders why they trouble to attach their own merely personal names to their volumes, for, so far as those volumes are concerned, there is no one to be found in them answering to the name of the ostensible author.

Suppose, for example, that the author's name on the title-page is "Brown." Well, so far as we can find out by reading, "Brown" might just as well be "Green." In fact, there is no "Brown" discoverable—no individual man behind the pen that wrote, not out of the fullness of the heart, or the originality of the brain, from any experience or knowledge or temperament peculiar to "Brown," but out of the fullness of what one might call a creatively assimilated education, and by the aid of a special talent for the combination of literary influences.

We have had a great deal of pleasure in the reading, we have admired this and that, we may even have been astonished, but I repeat—there is no "Brown." In private life "Brown" may be a forceful and fascinating personality, but, so far as literature is concerned, he is merely a "wonderful literary machine." He has been able, by his remarkable skill, to conjure every other writer into his book—except himself. The name "Brown" on his title-page means nothing. He has not "made his name."

NAMES THAT HAVE A MEANING

The phrase "to make a name" has become so dulled with long usage that it is worth while to pause and consider what a reality it stands for. What it really means, of course, is that certain men and women, by the personal force or quality of their lives, have succeeded in charging their names—names given them originally haphazard, as names are given to all of us—with a permanent significance as unmistakable as that belonging to the commonest noun. The name "Byron" has a meaning as clear and unmistakable as the word "mutton." The words "dog" and "cat" have a meaning hardly more clearly defined than the name "Burns" or "Voltaire." An

oak-tree can no more be mistaken for a willow than Shakespeare can be confused with Spenser. If we say "Coleridge," there is no possibility of any one thinking that perhaps we meant "Browning."

The reason, of course, is that these names are as unmistakably "made" as a Krupp gun or a Sheffield razor. Sincere, intense life has passed into them, life lived as the men who bore those names either chose, or were forced, to live it; individual experience, stern or gentle, in combination with an individual gift of expression.

All names that are really "made" are made in the same way. You may make a name as Napoleon made his, through war, or you may make it as Keats made his, by listening to the nightingale and worshipping the moon. Or you may make it as Charles Lamb made his, merely by loving old folios, whist, and roast pig. All that is necessary—granted, of course, the gift of literary expression—is sincerity, an unshakable faithfulness to yourself.

In really great writers—or, at all events, in those writings of theirs by which they immortally exist—there is not one insincere word. The perishable parts of great writers will, without exception, be found to be those writings which they attempted either in insincere moments, or at the instigation of some surface talent that had no real connection with their deep-down selves.

REAL WRITING MUST BE A WRITER'S LIFE

All real writing has got to be lived before it is written—lived not only once or twice, but lived over and over again. Mere reporting won't do in literature, nor the records of easy voyaging through perilous seas. Dante had to walk through hell before he could write of it, and men to-day who would write either of hell or of heaven will never do it by a study of fashionable drawing-rooms, or prolonged sojourns in the country houses of the great.

On the other hand, if you wish to write convincingly about what we call "society," those lords and ladies, for example, who are just as real in their strange way as coal-heavers and mechanics, it is of no use your trying, unless you were fortunate enough to be born among them, or have been unfortunately associated with them all your life. To write with reality about the most artificial condition necessitates an intimate acquaintance with it that, at its best, is tragic. Those who would write about the

depths and the heights must have dared them, not merely as visitors, but as awe-stricken inhabitants. Similarly, those who would write about the plain, the long, low levels of commonplace human life, must have dwelt in them, have possessed the dreary, unlaureled courage of the good bourgeois, have known what it is to live out the day just for the day's sake, with the blessed hope of a reasonably respectable and comfortable conclusion.

Probably it seldom occurs to us to think what a tremendously rooted life is needed to make even one lasting lyric, though the strangeness of the process is but the same strangeness that accompanies the antecedent preparation of a flower.

How many suns it takes
To make one speedwell blue—

was no mere fancy of a poet. It is a fact of the long sifting and kneading to which time subjects the material of its perfect things.

One could not get a better example of what I mean than Lovelace's song "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars," without which no anthology of English verse could possibly be published. Why does generation after generation say over and over, and hand on to its children:

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much
Loved I not honor more.

Is it merely because it is so well written, or because it embodies a highly moral sentiment suitable to the education of young men? No, it is because the sword and the pen for once met together in the hand of a man, because a soldier and a lover and a poet met together in a song. One might almost say that Lovelace wrote his lyric first with his sword, and merely copied it out with his pen. At all events, he was first a man and incidentally a poet; and every real poet that ever sang, whether or not he wielded the weapons of physical warfare, has been just the same. Otherwise he could not have been a poet.

When one speaks of the man behind the pen, one does not necessarily mean that the writer must be a man of dominant personality, suggestive in every sentence of "the strenuous life," and muscle, and "punch." Literature might be described as the world

in words, and as it takes all kinds of men to make a world, so with the world of literature. All we ask is that we should be made aware of some kind of a man. Numerous other qualities besides "the punch" go to the making of living literature, though blood and brawn, not to say brutality, have of late had it so much their own way in the fashionable literature of the day—written by muscular literary gentlemen who seem to write rather with their fists than their pens—that we are in danger of forgetting the reassuring truth.

STRENUOUS TYPES AND OTHERS

J. M. Barrie long ago made a criticism on Rudyard Kipling which has always stayed by me as one of the most useful of critical touchstones.

"Mr. Kipling," said he, "has yet to learn that a man may know more of life staying at home by his mother's knee than swaggering in bad company over three continents."

One need not go farther than Mr. Barrie's own writings to prove the truth of his axiom, for if "Margaret Ogilvy"—Mr. Barrie's picture of his own mother—is not literature, I do not know where to look for it among contemporary printed books.

Nor is successful literature necessarily the record of the successful temperament. Some writers, not a few, owe their significance to the fact that they have found humanly intimate expression for their own failure, or set down their weakness in such a way as to make themselves the consoling companions of human frailty and disappointment through the generations. It is the paradox of such natures that they should express themselves in the very record of their frustration. Amiel may be taken as the type of such writers. In confiding to his "Journal" his hopeless inability for expressing his high thought, he expressed what is infinitely more valuable to us—himself.

Nor, again, does it follow that the man who thus gets himself individualized in literature is the kind of man we care about or approve of. Often it is quite the contrary, and we may think that it had been just as well if some human types had not been able so forcibly to project into literature their unworthy and undesirable selves. Yet this is God's world, and nothing human must be foreign to the philosophical student of it.

All the "specimens" in a natural history museum are not things of beauty or joy. So it is in the world of books. François Villon cannot be called an edifying specimen of the human family, yet he unmistakably belongs there, and it was to that prince of scallawags that we owe not merely that loveliest sigh in literature—"Where are the snows of yester-year?"—but so striking a picture of the underworld of medieval Paris that without it we should hardly be able to know the times as they were.

The same applies to Benvenuto Cellini—bully, assassin, insufferable egoist, and so forth, as well as artist. If he had not been sufficiently in love with his own swash-buckler rascality to write his amazing autobiography, how dim to our imaginations, comparatively, would have been the world of the Italian Renaissance!

Again, in our own day, take Baudelaire, a personality even less agreeable still—morbid, diseased, if you will, wasting, you may deem, immense poetic powers on revealing the beauty of those "flowers of evil" which had as well been left in their native shade. Yet, it is because he saw them so vividly, cared to see little else, dwelt in his own strange corner of the world with such an intensity of experience, that he is—Baudelaire. Like him or not, his name is "made." A queer kind of man, indeed, but not "only a pen."

IMPERSONALITY AND FRANK EGOISM

Certain writers have made a cult of "impersonality" in literature. They would do their utmost to keep themselves out of sight, to let their subject-matter tell its own tale. But such a feat is an impossibility. They might as well try to get out of their own skins. The mere effort at suppression ends in a form of revelation. Their mere choice of themes and manner of presentation, let them keep behind the scenes as assiduously as they may, will in the end stamp them. However much a man may hide behind his pen, so that indeed his personality, compared with that of more subjective writers, remains always somewhat enigmatic, yet when the pen is wielded by a man, whatever his reticence or his mask, we know that a man is there—and that is all that concerns us.

On the other hand, of course, there are companionable, sympathetic writers whose whole stock in trade is themselves, their per-

sonal charm, their personal way of looking at things. Of these, Montaigne and Charles Lamb are among the great examples. It matters to us little or nothing what they are writing about; for their subjects, so far as they are concerned, are only important in relation to themselves, as revealing to us by reflection two uncommonly "human" human beings, whom it is impossible to mistake for any one else; just as we enjoy the society of some whimsical talker among our living friends, valuing him not so much for what he says, but for the way he says it, and because it is he, and no one else, that is talking.

Again, there are other men whose names, in addition to their personal suggestion, have an impersonal significance as marking new eras of human development, such as Erasmus or Rousseau or Darwin; men who embodied the time-spirit at crucial moments of world change, men who announced rather than created, the heralds of epochs, men who first took the new roads along which the rest of mankind were presently to travel, men who felt or saw something new for the first time, prophets of dawn while yet their fellows slept.

Sometimes a man will come to stand for a whole nation, like Robert Burns or Cervantes; on a great, half-legendary age of the world, like Homer; or some permanent attitude of the human spirit, like Plato.

No fixed star, great or small, in the firmament of literature ever got there without some vital reason, or merely by writing, however remarkable. The idea that literature is a mere matter of writing is seen to be the hollowest of misconceptions the moment you run over any list of enduring names. Try any such that you can think of, and in every case you will find that the name stands for something more than a writer. Of course, the man had to have his own peculiar genius for writing, but the peculiarity was but the result of his individual being, his own special way of living his life or viewing the world.

IMMORTAL LITERARY PERSONALITIES

Take Horace, for example. Does he live merely because of his unique style, his masterly use of the Latin tongue? By means of that, of course, but only secondarily. Primarily, he is as alive to-day as he was when he sauntered through the streets of Rome, because he was so absolutely the type of the well-bred man of the world in

all countries and times. He lived seriously in the social world as he found it, and felt no idealistic craving to have it remolded nearer to the heart's desire. He was satisfied with its pleasures, and at one with its philosophy. Thus he is as much at home in modern Paris or London or New York as in ancient Rome, and his book is, therefore, forever immortal as the man of the world's Bible.

Take a name so different as that of Shelley. We have but to speak it to define all it now stands for. Though no one should read a line of Shelley's any more, the dream he dreamed has passed into the very life-blood of mankind. Wherever men strive for freedom, or seek to attune their lives to the strange spiritual music that breathes through all things—music that none ever heard more clearly than he—there is Shelley like the morning star to guide them and inspire.

Think what Wordsworth means to the spiritual thought of the modern world. In his own day he was one of the most lonely and laughed at of poets, moping among his lakes and mountains and shepherds. Yet, as Matthew Arnold said, "we are all Wordsworthians nowadays," and the religion of nature that he found there for himself in his solitude bids fair to be the final religion of the modern world.

It is the same with every other great name one can think of, be it Bunyan or Heine, Schopenhauer or Izaak Walton. One has but to cast one's eyes over one's shelves to realize, as we see the familiar names, how literally the books that bear them are living men, merely transmigrated from their fleshly forms into the printed word. Shakespeare and Milton, yes, even Pope; Johnson, Fielding, Sterne, Scott,

Dickens, Thackeray, Carlyle, Dumas, Balzac, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Poe—their very faces seem to look out at us from the bindings, such vividly human beings were they, with a vision of the world, or a definition of character, so much their own and no one else's. One might almost call them patented human beings—patentees of spiritual discoveries, or of aspects of humanity, whose patents can never be infringed for all our cleverness.

Said Tennyson, in bitter answer to criticism that began to depreciate him because of the glibness of his imitators:

All can grow the flower now,
For all have got the seed.

And certainly, as I have already said, the art of literary impersonation is carried to a pitch to-day that almost amounts to genius. Yet you have only to compare the real flower with the imitation, and you will soon understand the difference.

Take Walter Scott. It is a commonplace to say how much better we do the historical novel nowadays than he did. At first sight, we may seem to; in certain technical particulars, no doubt we do; but read him again, read "Rob Roy" or "Quentin Durward" again, and you will not be quite so sure. You will realize what an immortal difference there is, after all, between the pen with a man behind it, and the most brilliant literary machine.

Yes, "the mob of gentlemen that write with ease" is once more with us, but no real book was ever yet written with ease, and no book has ever survived, or ever can, in which we do not feel the presence of the fighting, dreaming, or merely enjoying soul of a man.

TWILIGHT SONG

LONGINGLY at twilight-fall,
When the shadows violet are,
"Will she come, if I should call?"
Cried I to a star.
And the star made answer clear—
"She is near, oh, she is near!"

Tenderly, at droop of night,
When the roses spill their musk,
"Will she come, my heart's delight?"
Cried I to the dusk.
Loving lips on mine were laid—
Thus the dusk its answer made!

Clinton Scollard

THE LAND OF BROKEN PROMISES

A NOVEL—COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE

BY DANE COOLIDGE

AUTHOR OF "THE FIGHTING FOOL," "HIDDEN WATER," "THE TEXICAN," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY P. J. MONAHAN

THE slow-rolling winter's sun rose coldly, far to the south, riding up from behind the saw-toothed Sierras of Mexico to throw a silvery halo on Gadsden, the border city. A hundred miles of desert lay in its path—a waste of broken ridges, dry arroyos, and sandy plains—and then suddenly, as if by magic, the city rose gleaming in the sun.

It was a big city, for the West, and swarming with traffic and men. Its broad main street, lined with brick buildings and throbbing with automobiles, ran from the railroad straight to the south until, at a line, it stopped short and was lost in the desert.

That line which marked the sudden end of growth and progress was the border of the United States; the desert was Mexico. And the difference was not in the land, but in the government.

As the morning air grew warm and the hoar frost dripped down from the roofs the idlers of the town crept forth, leaving chill lodgings and stale saloons for the street corners and the sun.

Against the dead wall of a big store the Mexicans gathered in shivering groups, their blankets wrapped around their necks and their brown ankles bare to the wind. On another corner a bunch of cowboys stood clannishly aloof, eying the passing crowd for others of their kind.

In this dun stream which flowed under the morning sun there were mining men, with high-laced boots and bulging pockets;

graybeards, with the gossip of the town in their cheeks; hoboes, still wearing their Eastern caps and still rustling for a quarter to eat on; somber-eyed refugees and soldiers of fortune from Mexico—but idlers all, and each seeking his class and kind.

If any women passed that way they walked fast, looking neither to the right nor to the left; for they, too, being so few, missed their class and kind.

Gadsden had become a city of men, huge-limbed and powerful and with a questing look in their eyes; a city of adventurers gathered from the ends of the world. A common calamity had driven them from their mines and ranches and glutted the town with men, for the war was on in Mexico and from the farthestmost corners of Sonora they still came, hot from some new scene of murder and pillage, to add their modicum to the general discontent.

As the day wore on the crowd on the bank corner, where the refugees made their stand, changed its complexion, grew big, and stretched far up the street. Men stood in shifting groups, talking, arguing, gazing moodily at those who passed.

Here were hawk-eyed Texas cattlemen, thinking of their scattered herds at Mababi or El Tigre; mining men, with idle prospects and deserted mines as far south as the Rio Yaqui; millmen, ranchers, and men of trades; all driven in from below the line and all chafing at the leash. While a hundred petty chiefs stood out against

Madero and lived by ransom and loot, they must cool their heels in Gadsden and wait for the end to come.

Into this seething mass of the dispossessed, many of whom had lost a fortune by the war, there came two more, with their faces still drawn and red from hard riding through the cold. They stepped forth from the marble entrance of the big hotel and swung off down the street to see the town.

They walked slowly, gazing into the strange faces in the vague hope of finding some friend; and Gadsden, not to be outdone, looked them over curiously and wondered whence they had come.

The bunch of cowboys, still loitering on the corner, glanced scornfully at the smaller man, who sported a pair of puttees—and then at the big man's feet. Finding them encased in prospector's shoes they stared dumbly at his wind-burned face and muttered among themselves.

He was tall, and broad across the shoulders, with far-seeing blue eyes and a mop of light hair; and he walked on his toes, stiff-legged, swaying from the hips like a man on horseback. The rumble of comment rose up again as he raked past and then a cowboy voice observed:

"I bet ye he's a cow-punch!"

The big man looked back at them mockingly out of the corner of his eye and went on without a word.

It is the boast of cowboys that they can tell another puncher at a glance, but they are not alone in this—there are other crafts that leave their mark and other men as shrewd. A group of mining men took one look at the smaller man, noting the candle-grease on his corduroys and the intelligence in his eyes; and to them the big man was no more than a laborer—or a shift-boss at most—and the little man was one of their kind. Every line in his mobile face spoke of intellect and decision, and as they walked it was he who did the talking while the big man only nodded and smiled.

They took a turn or two up the street, now drifting into some clamorous saloon, now standing at gaze on the sidewalk; and as the drinks began to work, the little man became more and more animated, the big man more and more amiable in his assent and silence.

Then as they passed the crowd of refugees they stopped and listened, commenting on the various opinions by an exchange of

knowing smiles. An old prospector, white-haired and tanned to a tropic brown, finally turned upon a presumptuous optimist and the little man nodded approvingly as he heard him express his views.

"You can say what you please," the prospector ended, "but I'm going to keep out of that country. I've knowed them Mexicans for thirty years now and I'm telling you they're gitting treacherous. It don't do no good to have your gun with you—they'll shoot you from behind a rock—and if they can't git you that way, they'll knife you in your sleep.

"I've noticed a big change in them *paisanos* since this war come on. Before Madero made his break they used to be scared of Americans—thought if they killed one of us the rest would cross the border and eat 'em up. What few times they did tackle a white man he generally give a good account of himself, too, and I've traveled them trails for years without hardly knowing what it was to be afraid of anybody; but I tell you it's entirely different over there now."

"Sure! That's right!" spoke up the little man, with spirit. "You're talking more sense than any man on the street. I guess I ought to know—I've been down there and through it all—and it's got so now that you can't trust *any* of 'em. My pardner and I came clear from the Sierra Madres, riding nights, and we come pretty near knowing—hey, Bud?"

"That's right," observed Bud, the big man, with a reminiscent grin, "I begin to think them fellers would get us, for a while!"

"Mining men?" inquired the old prospector politely.

"Working on a lease," said the little man briefly. "Owner got scared out and let us in on shares. But no more for muh—this will hold me for quite a while, I can tell you!"

"Here, too," agreed the big man, turning to go. "Arizona is good enough for me—come on, Phil!"

"Where to?" The little man drew back half resentfully, and then he changed his mind. "All right," he said, falling into step, "a gin fizz for mine!"

"Not on an empty stomach," admonished his pardner; "you might get lit up and tell somebody all you know. How about something to eat?"

"Good! But where 're you going?"

The big man was leading off down a side street, and once more they came to a halt.

"Jim's place—it's a lunch-counter," he explained laconically. "The hotel's all right, and maybe that was a breakfast we got, but I get hungry waiting that way. Gimme a lunch-counter, where I can wrop my legs around a stool and watch the cook turn 'em over. Come on—I been there before."

An expression of pitying tolerance came over the little man's face as he listened to this rhapsody on the quick lunch, but he drew away reluctantly.

"Aw, come on, Bud," he pleaded. "Have a little class! What's the use of winning a stake if you've got to eat at a dog-joint? And besides—say, that was a peach of a girl that waited on us this morning! Did you notice her hair? She was a pippin! I left four-bits under my plate!"

The big man wagged his hand resignedly and started on his way.

"All right, pardner," he observed; "if that's the deal she's probably looking for you. I'll meet you in the room."

"Aw, come on!" urged the other, but his heart was not in it, and he turned gaily away up the main street.

Left to himself, the big man went on to his lunch-counter, where he ordered oysters, "a dozen in the milk." Then he ordered a beefsteak, to make up for several he had missed, and asked the cook to fry it rare. He was just negotiating for a can of pears that had caught his eye when an old man came in and took the stool beside him, picking up the menu with a trembling hand.

"Give me a cup of coffee," he said to the waiter, "and"—he gazed at the bill of fare carefully—"and a roast-beef sandwich. No, just the coffee!" he corrected, and at that Bud gave him a look. He was a small man, shabbily dressed and with scraggly whiskers, and his nose was very red.

"Here," called Bud, coming to an instant conclusion, "give 'im his sandwich; I'll pay for it!"

"All right," answered the waiter, who was no other than Sunny Jim, the proprietor, and, whisking up a sandwich from the sideboard, he set it before the old man, who glanced at him in silence. For a fraction of a second he regarded the sandwich apathetically; then, with the aid

of his coffee, he made away with it and slipped down off his stool.

"Say," observed the proprietor, as Bud was paying his bill, "do you know who that old-timer was?"

"What old-timer?" inquired Bud, who had forgotten his brusque benefaction.

"Why, that old feller that you treated to the sandwich."

"Oh—him! Some old drunk around town?" hazarded Bud.

"Well, he's that, too," conceded Sunny Jim, with a smile. "But lemme tell you, pardner, if you had half the rocks that old boy's got you wouldn't need to punch any more cows. That's Henry Kruger, the man that just sold the Cross-Cut Mine for fifty thousand cash, and he's got more besides."

"Huh!" grunted Bud, "he sure don't look it! Say, why didn't you put me wise? Now I've got to hunt him up and apologize."

"Oh, that's all right," assured the proprietor; "he won't take any offense. That's just like Old Henry—he's kinder queer that way."

"Well, I'll go and see him, anyway," said Bud. "He might think I was butting in."

And then, going about his duty with philosophical calm, he ambled off, stiff-legged, down the street.

II

It was not difficult to find Henry Kruger in Gadsden. The barkeepers, those efficient purveyors of information and drinks, knew him as they knew their thumbs, and a casual round of the saloons soon located him in the back room of the Waldorf.

"Say," began Bud, walking bluffly up to him, "the proprietor of that restaurant back there tells me I made a mistake when I insisted in paying for your meal. I jest wanted to let you know—"

"Oh, that's all right, young man," returned Old Henry, looking up with a humorous smile; "we all of us make our mistakes. I knowed you didn't mean no offense and so I never took none. Fact is, I liked you all the better for it. This country is getting settled up with a class of people that never give a nickel to nobody. You paid for that meal like it was nothing, and never so much as looked at me. Sit down, sit down—I want to talk to you!"

They sat down by the stove and fell into a friendly conversation in which nothing more was said of the late inadvertence, but when Bud rose to go the old man beckoned him back.

"Hold on," he protested; "don't go off mad. I want to have a talk with you on business. You seem to be a pretty good young fellow—maybe we can make some dicker. What are you looking for in these parts?"

"Well," responded Bud, "some kind of a leasing proposition, I reckon. Me and my pardner jest come in from Mexico, over near the Chihuahua line, and we don't hardly know what we do want yet."

"Yes, I've noticed that pardner of yours," remarked Henry Kruger dryly. "He's a great talker. I was listening to you boys out on the street there, having nothing else to do much, and being kinder on the lookout for a man, anyway, and it struck me I liked your line of talk best."

"You're easy satisfied, then," observed Bud, with a grin. "I never said a word hardly."

"That's it," returned Kruger significantly; "this job I've got *calls* for a man like that."

"Well, Phil's all right," spoke up Bud, with sudden warmth. "We been pardners for two years now and he never give nothing away yet! He talks, but he don't forget himself. And the way he can palaver them Mexicans is a wonder."

"Very likely, very likely," agreed Kruger, and then he sat a while in silence.

"We got a few thousand dollars with us, too," volunteered Bud at last. "I'm a good worker, if that's what you want—and Phil, he's a mining engineer."

"Um-m," grunted Kruger, tugging at his beard, but he did not come out with his proposal.

"I tell you," he said at last. "I'm not doing much talking about this proposition of mine. It's a big thing, and somebody might beat me to it. You know who I am, I guess. I've pulled off some of the biggest deals in this country for a poor man, and I don't make many mistakes—not about mineral, anyway. And when I tell you that this is rich—you're talking with a man that knows."

He fixed his shrewd, blue eyes on the young man's open countenance and waited for him to speak.

"That's right," he continued, as Bud

finally nodded non-committally; "she's sure rich. I've had an eye on this proposition for years—just waiting for the right time to come. And now it's come! All I need is the man. It ain't a dangerous undertaking—leastwise I don't think it is—but I got to have somebody I can trust. I'm willing to pay you good wages, or I'll let you in on the deal—but you'll have to go down into Mexico."

"Nothin' doing!" responded Bud with instant decision. "If it's in Arizona I'll talk to you, but no more Mexico for me. I've got something pretty good down there myself, as far as that goes."

"What's the matter?" inquired Kruger, set back by the abrupt refusal; "scared?"

"Yes, I'm scared," admitted Bud, and he challenged the old man with his eyes.

"Must have had a little trouble, then?"

"Well, you might call it that," agreed Bud. "We been on the dodge for a month. A bunch of *revoltosos* tried to get our treasure, and when we skipped out on 'em they tried to get us."

"Well," continued Kruger, "this proposition of mine is different. You was over in the Sierra Madres, where the natives are bad. These Sonora Mexicans ain't like them Chihuahua fellers—they're Americanized. I'll tell you, if it wasn't that the people would know me I'd go down after this mine myself. The country's perfectly quiet. There's lots of Americans down there yet, and they don't even know there is a revolution. It ain't far from the railroad, you see, and that makes a lot of difference."

He lowered his voice to a confidential whisper as he revealed the approximate locality of his bonanza, but Bud remained unimpressed.

"Yes," he said, "we was near a railroad—the Northwestern—and seemed like them red-flaggers did nothing else but burn bridges and ditch supply trains. When they finally whipped 'em off the whole bunch took to the hills. That's where we got it again."

"Well," argued Kruger, "this railroad of ours is all right, and they run a train over it every day. The concentrator at Fortuna"—he lowered his voice again—"hasn't been shut down a day, and you'll be within fifteen miles of that town. No," he whispered; "I could get a hundred Americans to go in on this to-morrow, as far's the revolution's concerned. It ain't



"SO SHE GAVE ME HER HAND AND AWAY WE WENT"

[See page 311]

dangerous, but I want somebody I can trust."

"Nope," pronounced Bud, rising ponderously to his feet; "if it was this side the line I'd stay with you till the hair slipped, on anything, but—"

"Well, let's talk it over again some time," urged Kruger, following him along out. "It ain't often I git took with a young feller the way I was with you, and I believe we can make it yet. Where are you staying in town?"

"Up at the Cochise," said Bud. "Come on with me—I told my pardner I'd meet him there."

They turned up the broad main street and passed in through the polished stone portals of the Cochise, a hotel so spacious in its interior and so richly appointed in its furnishings that a New Yorker, waking up there, might easily imagine himself on Fifth Avenue.

It was hardly a place to be looked for in the West, and as Bud led the way across the echoing lobby to a pair of stuffed chairs he had a vague feeling of being in church. Stained-glass windows above the winding stairways let in a soft light, and on the towering pillars of marble were emblazoned prickly-pears as an emblem of the West. From the darkened balconies above, half-seen women looked down curiously as they entered, and in the broad lobby below were gathered the prosperous citizens of the land.

There were cattlemen, still wearing their boots and overalls, the better to attend to their shipping; mining men, just as they had come from the hills; and others more elegantly dressed—but they all had a nod for Henry Kruger. He was a man of mark, as Bud could see in a minute; but if he had other business with those who hailed him he let it pass and took out a rank brier pipe, which he puffed while Bud smoked a cigarette.

They were sitting together in a friendly silence when Phil came out of the dining-room, but as he drew near the old man nodded to Bud and went over to speak to the clerk.

"Who was that old-timer you were talking to?" inquired Phil, as he sank down in the vacant chair. "Looks like the-mornin'-after with him, don't it?"

"Um," grunted Bud; "reckon it is. Name's Kruger."

"What—the mining man?"

"That's right."

"Well," exclaimed Phil, "what in the world was he talking to you about?"

"Oh, some kind of a mining deal," grumbled Bud. "Wanted me to go down into Mexico!"

"What'd you tell him?" challenged the little man, sitting up suddenly in his chair. "Say, that old boy's got rocks!"

"He can keep 'em for all of me," observed Bud comfortably. "You know what I think about Mexico."

"Sure; but what was his proposition? What did he want you to do?"

"Search me! He was mighty mysterious about it. Said he wanted a man he could trust."

"Well, holy Moses, Bud!" cried Phil, "wake up! Didn't you get his proposition?"

"No, he wasn't talking about it. Said it was a good thing and he'd pay me well, or let me in on the deal; but when he hollered Mexico I quit. I've got a plenty."

"Yes, but—" the little man choked and could say no more. "Well, you're one jim dandy business man, Bud Hooker!" he burst out at last. "You'd let—"

"Well, what's the matter?" demanded Hooker defiantly. "Do *you* want to go back into Mexico? Nor me, neither! What you kicking about?"

"You might have led him on and got the scheme, anyway. Maybe there's a million in it. Come on, let's go over and talk to him. I'd take a chance, if it was good enough."

"Aw, don't be a fool, Phil," urged the cowboy plaintively. "We've got no call to hear his scheme unless we want to go in on it. Leave him alone and he'll do something for us on this side. Oh, cripes, what's the matter with you?"

He heaved himself reluctantly up out of his chair and moved over to where Kruger was sitting.

"Mr. Kruger," he said, as the old man turned to meet him, "I'll make you acquainted with Mr. De Lancey, my pardner. My name's Hooker."

"Glad to know you, Hooker," responded Kruger, shaking him by the hand. "How'do, Mr. De Lancey."

He gave Phil a rather crusty nod as he spoke, but De Lancey was dragging up another chair and failed to notice.

"Mr. Hooker was telling me about some proposition you had, to go down into

Mexico," he began, drawing up closer while the old man watched him from under his eyebrows. "That's one tough country to do business in right now, but at the same time—"

"The country's perfectly quiet," put in Kruger—"perfectly quiet."

"Well, maybe so," qualified De Lancey; "but when it comes to getting in supplies—"

"Not a bit of trouble in the world," said the old man crabbedly. "Not a bit."

"Well," came back De Lancey, "what's the matter, then? What is the proposition, anyway?"

Henry Kruger blinked and eyed him intently.

"I've stated the proposition to Hooker," he said, "and he refused it. That's enough, ain't it?"

De Lancey laughed and turned away.

"Well, yes, I guess it is." Then, in passing, he said to Bud: "Go ahead and talk to him."

He walked away, lighting a cigarette and smiling good-naturedly, and the old-timer turned to Bud.

"That's a smart man you've got for a pardner," he remarked. "A smart man. You want to look out," he added, "or he'll get away with you."

"Nope," said Bud. "You don't know him like I do. He's straight as a die."

"A man can be straight and still get away with you," observed the veteran shrewdly. "Yes, indeed." He paused to let this bit of wisdom sink in, and then he spoke again.

"You better quit—while you're lucky," he suggested. "You quit and come with me," he urged, "and if we strike it I'll make you a rich man. I don't need your pardner on this deal. I need just one man that can keep his head shut. Listen now; I'll tell you what it is.

"I know where there's a lost mine down in Mexico. If I'd tell you the name you'd know it in a minute, and it's free gold, too. Now there's a fellow that had that land located for ten years, but he couldn't find the lead. D'ye see? And when this second revolution came on he let it go—he neglected to pay his mining taxes and let it go back to the government. And now all I want is a quiet man to slip in and denounce that land and open up the lead. Here, look at this!"

He went down into his pocket and

brought out a buckskin sack, from which he handed over a piece of well-worn quartz.

"That's the rock," he said. "She runs four hundred dollars to the ton, and the ledge is eight inches wide between the walls. Nice ore, eh? And she lays between shale and porphyry."

His eyes sparkled as he carefully replaced the specimen, and then he looked up at Bud.

"I'll let you in on that," he said, "half and half—or I'll pay two hundred dollars a month and a bonus. You alone. Now how about it?"

For a moment Hooker looked at him as if to read his thoughts, then he shook his head and exhaled his smoke regretfully.

"Nope," he said. "Me and Phil are pardners. We work together."

"I'll give you three hundred!" cried Kruger, half rising in his chair.

"Nope," grunted Bud, "we're pardners."

"Huh!" snorted the mining man, and flung away in disgust. But as he neared the door a new thought struck him and he came as quickly back.

"You can do what you please about your pardner," he said. "I'm talking to you! Now—will you think about it?"

"Sure!" returned Hooker.

"Well, then," snapped Kruger, "meet me at the Waldorf in an hour!"

III

ON the untrammelled frontier, where most men are willing to pass for what they are without keeping up any "front," much of the private business, as well as the general devilment, is transacted in the back rooms of saloons. The Waldorf was nicely furnished in this regard.

After a drink at the bar, in which De Lancey and Hooker joined, Henry Kruger led the way casually to the rear, and in a few moments they were safely closeted.

"Now," began Kruger, as he took a seat by the table and faced them with snapping eyes, "the first thing I want to make plain to you gentlemen is, if I make any deal to-day it's to be with Mr. Hooker. If you boys are pardners you can talk it over together, but I deal with one man, and that's Hooker."

"All right?" he inquired, glancing at De Lancey, and that young man nodded indulgently.

"Very well, then," resumed Kruger,

"now to get down to business. This mine that I'm talking about is located down here in Sonora within three hours' ride of a big American camp. It isn't any old Spanish mine, or lost *padre* layout; it's a well-defined ledge running three or four hundred dollars to the ton—and I know right where it is, too.

"What I want to do is to establish the title to it now, while this revolution is going on, and make a bonanza out of it afterward. Of course, if you boys don't want to go back into Mexico, that settles it; but if you do go, and I let you in on the deal, you've got to see it through or I'll lose the whole thing. So make up your minds, and if you say you'll go, I want you to stick to it!"

"We'll go, all right," spoke up De Lancey, "if it's rich enough."

"How about you?" inquired Kruger, turning impatiently on Bud; "will you go?"

"Yes, I'll go," answered Bud sullenly. "But I ain't stuck on the job," he added. "Jest about get it opened up when a bunch of rebels will jump in and take everything we've got."

"Well, you get a title to it and pay your taxes and you can come out, then," conceded Henry Kruger.

"No," grumbled Hooker, "if I go I'll stay with it." He glanced at his pardner at this, but he, for one, did not seem to be worried.

"I'll try anything—once!" he observed with a sprightly air, and Bud grinned sardonically at the well-worn phrase.

"Well," said Kruger, gazing inquiringly from one to the other, "is it a go? Will you shake hands on it?"

"What's the proposition?" broke in De Lancey eagerly.

"The deal is between me and Hooker," corrected Kruger. "I'll give him three hundred a month, or an equal share in the mine, expenses to be shared between us."

"Make it equal shares," said Hooker, holding out his hand, "and I'll give half of mine to Phil."

"All right, my boy!" cried the old man, suddenly clapping him on the shoulder, "I'll go you—and you'll never regret it," he added significantly. Then, throwing off the air of guarded secrecy which had characterized his actions so far, he sat down and began to talk.

"Boys," he said, "I'm feeling lucky to-

day or I'd never have closed this deal. I'm letting you in on one of the biggest things that's ever been found in Sonora. Just to show you how good it is, here's my smelter receipts for eight hundred pounds of picked ore—one thousand and twenty-two dollars! That's the first and last ore that's ever been shipped from the old Eagle Tail. I dug it out myself, and sacked it and shipped it; and then some of them crooked Mexican officials tried to beat me out of my title and I blowed up the whole works with dynamite!

"Yes, sir, clean as a whistle! I had my powder stored away in the drift, and the minute I found out I was euchred I laid a fuse to it and brought the whole mountain down. That was ten years ago, and old Aragon and the *agente mineral* have had the land located ever since.

"I bet they've spent five thousand pesos trying to find that lead, but being nothing but a bunch of ignorant Mexicans, of course they never found nothing. Then Francisco Madero comes in and fires the *agente mineral* off his job and old Aragon lets the land revert for taxes. I've got a Mexican that keeps me posted, and ever since he sent me word that the title had lapsed I've been crazy to relocate that claim.

"Well, now, that don't look so bad, does it?" he asked, beaming paternally at Bud. "There ain't a man in town that wouldn't have jumped at the chance, if I was where I could talk about it, but that's just what I couldn't do. I had to find some stranger that wouldn't sense what mine I was talking about and then git him to go in on it blind.

"Now here's the way I'm fixed, boys," he explained, brushing out his unkempt beard and smiling craftily. "When I dynamited the Eagle Tail it was mine by rights, but Cipriano Aragon—he's the big Mexican down at old Fortuna—and Morales, the mineral agent, had buncoed me out of the title.

"So, according to law, I blowed up their mine, and if I ever showed up down there I reckon they'd throw me into jail. And if at any time they find out that you're working for me, why, we're ditched—that's all! They'll put you out of business. So, after we've made our agreement and I've told you what to do, I don't want to hear a word out of you—I don't want you to come near me, nor even write me a letter—just

go ahead the best you can until you win out or go broke.

"It ain't a hard proposition," he continued, "if you keep your mouth shut, but if they tumble, it'll be a fight to a finish. I'm not saying this for you, Hooker, because I know you're safe; I'm saying it for your pardner here. You talk too much, Mr. De Lancey," he chided, eying him with sudden severity. "I'm afraid of ye!"

"All right," broke in Hooker good-naturedly, "I reckon we understand. Now go ahead and tell us where this mine is and who there is down there to look out for."

"The man to look out for," answered Kruger with venom, "is Cipriano Aragon. He's the man that bilked me out of the mine once, and he'll do it again if he can. When I went down there—it was ten years and more ago—I wasn't on to those Spanish ways of his, and he was so dog-goned polite and friendly I thought I could trust him anywhere.

"He owns a big ranch and mescal still, runs cattle, works a few placers, sends out pack-trains, and has every Mexican and Indian in the country in debt to him through his store, so if he happens to want any rough work done there's always somebody to do it.

"Well, just to show you how he did me, I got to nosing round those old Spanish workings east of Fortuna and finally I run across the ledge that I'm telling you about, not far from an abandoned shaft. But the Mexican mining laws are different from ours, and an American has lots of trouble anyway, so I made a trade with old Aragon that he should locate the claim for me under a power of attorney. Didn't know him then like I do now. The papers had to be sent to Moctezuma and Hermosillo, and to the City of Mexico and back, and while I was waiting around I dug in on this lead and opened up the prettiest vein of quartz you ever saw in your life. Here's a sample of it, and it's sure rich."

He handed De Lancey the familiar piece of quartz and proceeded with his story.

"That ore looked so good to me that I couldn't wait—I shipped it before I got my title. And right there I made my mistake. When Aragon saw the gold in that rock he just quietly recorded the concession in his own name and told me to go to blazes. That's the greaser of it! So I blew the whole mine up and hit for the border.

That's the Dutch of it, I reckon," he added grimly. "Anyway, my old man was Dutch."

He paused, smiling over the memory of his misplaced credulity, and Hooker and De Lancey joined in a hearty laugh. From the town bum that he had first seemed this shabby little man had changed in their eyes until now he was a border Cæsus, the mere recital of whose adventures conjured up in their minds visions of gold and hidden treasure.

The rugged face of Bud Hooker, which had been set in grim lines from the first, relaxed as the tale proceeded and his honest eyes glowed with admiration as he heard the well-planned scheme. As for De Lancey, he could hardly restrain his enthusiasm, and, drawn on by the contagion, Henry Kruger made maps and answered questions until every detail was settled.

After the location had been marked, and the lost tunnel charted from the corner monuments, he bade them remember it well and destroyed every vestige of paper. Then, as a final admonition, he said:

"Now go in there quietly, boys—don't hurry. Prospect around a little and the Mexicans will all come to you and try to sell you lost mines. Cruz Mendez is the man you're looking for—he's honest, and he'll take you to the Eagle Tail. After that you can use your own judgment. So good-by"—he took them by the hands—"and don't talk!"

He held up a warning finger as they parted, and Bud nodded briefly in reply. Silence was a habit with him, desert-bred, and he nodded his head for two.

IV

FROM the times of David and Jonathan down to the present day the world has been full of young men sworn to friendship and seeking adventure in pairs. "Pardners," they call them in the West, and though the word has not crept into the dictionary yet, it is as different from "partner" as a friend is from a business associate.

They travel together, these pardners of the West, and whether they be cowboys or "Cousin Jacks," the boss who fires one of them fires both of them, and they go share and share in everything.

Bud Hooker and Philip De Lancey had met by chance in El Paso when the revolution was just beginning to boil and the city was swarming with adventurers. The agents of the rebels were everywhere,

urging Americans to join their cause. Military preferment, cash payments, and grants of land were the baits they used, but Hooker stood out from the first and took De Lancey with him. A Mexican promise did not pass current where he was born and they went to the mines instead.

Then the war broke out and, while fugitives streamed out of stricken Chihuahua, they finally struck out against the tide, fighting their way to a certain mine far back in the Sierra Madres, where they could dig the gold on shares.

Behind them the battle waged; Casas Grandes was taken and retaken; Juarez, Agua Negra, and Chihuahua fell; Don Porfirio, the Old Man of Mexico, went out and Madero took his place; and still they worked for their stake.

Then new arms and ammunition flowed in from across the border; Orozco and his rebel chiefs went out, and the breath of war fanned higher against the hills. At last the first broken band of rebels came straggling by, and, reading hate and envy in their lawless eyes, the Americans dug up their gold at sundown and rode all the night for their lives.

And now, welded together by all that toil and danger, they were pardners, cherishing no delusions as to each other's strength or weaknesses, but joined together for better or worse.

It was the last thing that either of them expected, but three days after they fled out of Mexico, and with all their money unspent, the hand of fate seized upon them and sent them back on another adventure.

It was early morning again, with crowds along the street, and as they ambled slowly along toward the line the men on the corners stared at them. The bunch of cowboys gazed at Bud, who sported a new pair of high-heeled boots, and knew him by the way he rode; and the mining men looked searchingly at De Lancey, as if to guess the secret of his quest.

A squad of mounted troopers, riding out on border patrol, gazed after them questioningly, but Bud and Phil rode on soberly, leading their pack, and headed for Agua Negra across the line.

It was a grim place to look at, this border town of Agua Negra, for the war had swept it twice. A broad waste of level land lay between it and the prosperous American city, and across this swath, where the Mausers and machine guns had

twice mowed, lay the huddle of low houses which marked the domain of Mexico.

Fussy little customs officials, lurking like spiders in their cooped-up guard-houses, rushed out as they crossed the deep trench and demanded their permit to bear arms. The moment they crossed the line the air seemed to be pervaded with Latin excitability and Indian jealousy, but De Lancey replied in florid Spanish and before his polite assurances and fulsome compliments it was dissipated in a moment.

"Good! Pass on, *amigos*," cried the beady-eyed little *jefe*, pasting a label on their pack. "*Adios, señor*," he added, returning Phil's salute with a military flourish, and with a scornful glance at Bud he observed that the gentleman was *muy caballero*.

"Huh!" remarked Bud, as they rode on through the town, "we're in Mexico all right, all right. Talk with both hands and get busy with your eyebrows—and holy Joe, look at them *pelónes*!"

The *pelónes* referred to were a squad of Mexican Federal soldiers, so-called from their heads being shaved, and they were marching doggedly to and fro through the thorny mesquit-bushes in response to shouted orders from an officer. Being from Zacatecas, where the breed is short, they stood about as high as their guns; and their crumpled linen suits and flapping sandals detracted sadly from the soldierly effect.

Big and hulking, and swelling with the pride of his kind, Hooker looked them over slowly, and spoke his hidden thought.

"I wonder," he said, turning to Phil, "how many of them I could lick with one hand?"

"Well, they're nothing but a lot of petty convicts, anyway," answered De Lancey, "but here's some boys ahead that I'll bet could hold you, man for man, husky as you are, old fellow."

They were riding past a store, now serving as an improvised barracks, and romping about in the street were a pair of tall Yaqui Indians, each decorated with a cartridge-belt about his hips in token of his military service. Laughing and grabbing for holds, they frolicked like a couple of boys until finally they closed in a grapple that revealed a sudden and pantherlike strength.

And a group of others, sunning themselves against the wall, looked up at the

Americans with eyes as fearless as mountain eagles.

"Yes, that's right," admitted Bud, returning their friendly greeting, "but we'll never have no trouble with them."

"Well, these *Nacionales* are not so bad," defended Phil, as they passed the State soldiers of Sonora on the street, "but they're just as friendly as the Yaquis."

"Sure," jeered Bud, "when they're sober! But you get a bunch of 'em drunk and ask 'em what they think of the gringos! No, you got to show me—I've seen too much of 'em."

"You haven't seen as much of 'em as I have, yet," retorted De Lancey quickly. "I've been all over the republic, except right here in Sonora, and I swear these Sonorans here look good to me. There's no use holding a grouch against them, Bud—they haven't done us any dirt."

"No, they never had no chance," grumbled Bud, gazing grimly to the south. "But wait till the hot weather comes and the *revoltosos* come out of their holes; wait till them Chihuahua greasers thaw out up in the Sierras and come down to get some fresh mounts. Well, I'll tell 'em one thing," he ended, reaching down to pat his horse, "they'll never get old Copper Bottom here—not unless they steal him at night. It's all right to be cheerful about this, Phil, and you keep right on being glad, but I got a low-down hunch that we're going to get in bad."

"Well, I've got just as good a hunch," came back De Lancey, "that we're going to make a killing."

"Yes, and speaking of killings," said Bud, "you don't want to overlook *that*."

He pointed at a group of dismantled adobe buildings standing out on the edge of the town and flanked by a segment of whitewashed wall all spattered and breached with bullet-holes.

"There's where these prize Mexicans of yorn pulled off the biggest killing in Sonora. I was over here yesterday with that old prospector and he told me that that wall is the bull-ring. After the first big fight they gathered up three hundred and fifty men, more or less, and threwed 'em in a trench along by the wall—then they blowed it over on 'em with a few sticks of dynamite and let 'em pass for buried. No crosses or nothing. Excuse me, if they ever break loose like that—we might get planted with the rest!"

"By Jove, old top," exclaimed De Lancey, laughing teasingly, "you've certainly got the blues to-day. Here, take something out of this bottle and see if it won't help."

He brought out a quart bottle from his saddle-bags and Bud drank, and shuddered at the bite of it.

"All right," he said, as he passed it back, "and while we're talking, what's the matter with cutting it out on booze for this trip?"

"What are we going to drink, then?" cried De Lancey in feigned alarm, "water?"

"Well, something like that," admitted Bud. "Come on—what do you say? We might get lit up and tell something."

"Now lookee here, Bud," clamored Phil, who had had a few drinks already, "you don't mean to insinuate, do you? Next thing I know you'll be asking me to cut it out on the hay—might talk in my sleep, you know, and give the whole snap away!"

"No, you're a good boy when you're asleep, Phil," responded Bud, "but when you get about half shot it's different. Come on, now—I'll quit if you will. That's fair, ain't it?"

"What? No little toots around town? No serenading the *señoritas* and giving the *rurales* the hotfoot? Well, what's the use of living, Bud, if you can't have a little fun? Drinking don't make any difference, as long as we stick together. What's the use of swearing off—going on record in advance? We may find some fellow that we can't work any other way—we may have to go on a drunk with him in order to get his goat! But will you stick? That's the point!"

Bud glanced at him and grunted, and for a long time he rode on in silence. Before them lay a rolling plain, dipping by broad gulches and dwindling ridges to the lower levels of Old Mexico, and on the skyline, thin and blue, stood the knifelike edges of the Fortunas miles away.

With desert-trained eyes he noted the landmarks, San Juan mountain to the right, Old Niggerhead to the left, and the feather-edge of mountains far below; and as he looked he stored it away in his mind in case he should come back on the run some night.

It was not a foreboding, but the training of his kind, to note the lay of the ground, and he planned just where he

would ride to keep under cover if he ever made a dash for the line. But all the time his pardner was talking of friendship and of the necessity of their sticking together.

"I'll tell you, Bud," he said at last, his voice trembling with sentiment, "whether we win or lose, I won't have a single regret as long as I know we've been true to one another. You may know Texas and Arizona, Bud, but I know Old Mexico, the land of *mañana* and broken promises. I know the country, Bud—and the climate—and the women!

"They play the devil with the best of us, Bud, these dark-eyed *señoritas*! That's what makes all the trouble down here between man and man, it's these women and their ways. They're not satisfied to win a man's heart—they want him to kill somebody to show that he really loves them. By Jove, they're a fickle lot, and nothing pleases 'em more than setting man against man, one pardner against another."

"We never had no trouble yet," observed Bud sentimentously.

"No, but we're likely to," protested De Lancey. "Those Indian women up in the Sierras wouldn't turn anybody's head, but we're going down into the hot country now, where the girls are pretty, ta-ra, ta-ra, and we talk through the windows at midnight."

"Well, if you'll cut out the booze," said Hooker shortly, "you can have 'em all, for all of me."

"Sure, that's what you say, but wait till you see them! Oh, la, la, la"—he kissed his fingers ecstatically—"I'll be glad to see 'em myself! But listen, Bud, here's the proposition. let's take an oath right now, while we're starting out, that whatever comes up we'll always be true to each other. If one of us is wounded, the other stays with him; if he's in prison, he gets him out; if he's killed, he avenges his—"

"Say," broke in Bud, jostling him rudely as he reached into the saddle-bags, "let me carry that bottle for a while."

He took a big drink out of it to prevent De Lancey from getting it all and shoved it inside his overalls.

"All right, pardner," he continued, with a mocking smile, "anything you say. I never use oaths myself much, but anything to oblige."

"No, but I mean it, Bud!" cried De Lancey. "Here's the proposition now. Whatever happens, we stay with each other till this deal is finished; on all

scratch cases we match money to see who's it; and if we tangle over some girl the best man wins and the other one stays away. We leave it to the girl which one wins. Will you shake hands on that?"

"Don't need to," responded Bud; "I'll do it anyway."

"Well, shake on it, then!" insisted De Lancey, holding out his hand.

"Oh, Sally!" burst out Bud, hanging his head in embarrassment, "what's the use of getting mushy?"

But a moment later he leaned over in his saddle and locked hands with a viselike grip.

"My old man told me not to make no such promises," he muttered, "but I'll do it, being's it's you."

V

THE journey to Fortuna is a scant fifty miles by measure, but within those eighty kilometers there is a lapse of centuries in standards. As Bud and De Lancey rode out of battle-scarred Agua Negra they traveled a good road, well worn by the Mexican wood-wagons that hauled in mesquit from the hills. Then, as they left the town and the wood roads scattered, the highway changed by degrees to a broad trail, dug deep by the feet of pack-animals and marked but lightly with wheels. It followed along the railroad, cutting over hills and down through gulches, and by evening they were in the heart of Old Mexico.

Here were men in sandals and women barefoot; chickens tied up by the legs outside of brush *jacales*; long-nosed hogs, grunting fiercely as they skirmished for food; and half-naked children, staring like startled rabbits at the strangers.

The smell of garlic and fresh-roasting coffee was in the air as they drew into town for the night, and their room was an adobe chamber with tile floor and iron bars across the windows. Riding south the next day they met *vaqueros*, mounted on wiry mustangs, who saluted them gravely, taking no shame for their primitive wooden saddle-trees and pommels as broad as soup-plates.

As they left the broad plain and clambered up over the back of a mountain they passed Indian houses, brush-built and thatched with long, coarse grasses, and by the fires the women ground corn on stone *metates* as their ancestors had done before

the fall. For in Mexico there are two peoples, the Spaniards and the natives, and the Indians still remember the days when they were free.

It was through such a land that Phil and Hooker rode on their gallant ponies, leading a pack-animal well loaded with supplies from the north, and as the people gazed from their miserable hovels and saw their outfit they wondered at their wealth.

But if they were moved to envy, the bulk of a heavy pistol, showing through the swell of each coat, discouraged them from going farther; and the cold, searching look of the tall cowboy as he ambled past stayed in their memory long after the pleasant "Adios!" of De Lancey had been forgotten.

Americans were scarce in those days, and what few came by were riding to the north. How bold, then, must this big man be who rode in front—and certainly he had some great reward before him to risk such a horse among the *revoltosos*! So reasoned the simple-minded natives of the mountains, gazing in admiration at Copper Bottom, and for that look in their eyes Bud returned his forbidding stare.

There is something about a good horse that fascinates the average Mexican—perhaps because they breed the finest themselves and are in a position to judge—but Hooker had developed a romantic attachment for his trim little chestnut mount and he resented their wide-eyed gapings as a lover resents glances at his lady. This, and a frontier education, rendered him short-spoken and gruff with the *paisanos* and it was left to the cavalier De Lancey to do the courtesies of the road.

As the second day wore on they dipped down into a rocky cañon, with huge cliffs of red and yellow sandstone glowing in the slanting sun, and soon they broke out into a narrow valley, well wooded with sycamores and mesquits and giant hackberry-trees.

The shrill toots of a dummy engine came suddenly from down below and a mantle of black smoke rose majestically against the sky—then, at a turn of the trail, they topped the last hill and Fortuna lay before them.

In that one moment they were set back again fifty miles—clear back across the line—for Fortuna was American, from the power-house on the creek-bank to the mammoth concentrator on the hill.

All the buildings were of stone, square and uniform. First a central plaza, flanked with offices and warehouses; then behind them barracks and lodging-houses and trim cottages in orderly rows; and over across the cañon loomed the huge bulk of the mill and the concentrator with its aerial tramway and endless row of gliding buckets.

Only on the lower hills, where the rough country rock cropped up and nature was at its worst, only there did the real Mexico creep in and assert itself in a crude huddle of half-Indian huts; the dwellings of the care-free natives.

"Well, by Jove!" exclaimed De Lancey, surveying the scene with an appraising eye, "this doesn't look very much like Mexico—or a revolution, either!"

"No, it don't," admitted Bud; "everything running full blast, too. Look at that ore-train coming around the hill!"

"Gee, what a burg!" raved Phil; "say, there's some class to this—what? If I mistake not, we'll be able to find a few congenial spirits here to help us spend our money. Talk about a company town! I'll bet you their barroom is full of Americans. There's the corral down below—let's ride by and leave our horses and see what's the price of drinks. They can't feeze me, whatever it is—we doubled our money at the line."

Financially considered, they had done just that—for, for every American dollar in their pockets they could get two that were just as good, except for the picture on the side. This in itself was a great inducement for a ready spender and, finding good company at the Fortuna hotel bar, Phil bought five dollars' worth of drinks, threw down a five-dollar bill, and got back five dollars—Mex.

The proprietor, a large and jovial boniface, pulled off this fiscal miracle with the greatest good humor and then, having invited them to partake of a very exquisite mixture of his own invention, propped himself upon his elbows across the bar and inquired with an ingenuous smile:

"Well, which away are you boys traveling, if I may ask?"

"Oh, down below a ways," answered De Lancey, who always constituted himself the board of strategy. "Just rambling around a little—how's the country around here now?"

"Oh, quiet, quiet!" assured their host.

"These Mexicans don't like the cold weather much—they would freeze, you know, if it was not for that *zarape* which they wind about them so!"

He made a motion as of a native wrapping his entire wardrobe about his neck and smiled, and De Lancey knew that he was no Mexican. And yet that soft "which away" of his betrayed a Spanish tongue.

"Ah, excuse me," he said, taking quick advantage of his guess, "but from the way you pronounce that word '*zarape*' I take it that you speak Spanish."

"No one better," replied the host, smiling pleasurably at being taken at his true worth, "since I was born in the city of Burgos, where they speak the true Castilian. It is a different language, believe me, from this bastard Mexican tongue. And do you speak Spanish also?" he inquired, falling back into the staccato of Castile.

"No indeed!" protested De Lancey in a very creditable imitation; "nothing but a little Mexican, to get along with the natives. My friend and I are mining men, passing through the country, and we speak the best we can. How is this district here for work along our line?"

"None better!" cried the Spaniard, shaking his finger emphatically. "It is of the best, and, believe me, my friend, we should be glad to have you stop with us. The country down below is a little dangerous—not now, perhaps, but later, when the warm weather comes on.

"But in Fortuna—no! Here we are on the railroad; the camp is controlled by Americans; and because so many have left the country the Mexicans will sell their prospects cheap.

"Then again, if you develop a mine near by, it will be very easy to sell it—and if you wish to work it, that is easy, too. I am only the proprietor of the hotel, but if you can use my poor services in any way I shall be very happy to please you. A room? One of the best! And if you stay a week or more I will give you the lowest rate."

They passed up the winding stairs and down a long corridor, at the end of which the proprietor showed them into a room, throwing open the outer doors and shutters to let them see the view from the window.

"Here is a little balcony," he said, stepping outside, "where you can sit and look down on the plaza. We have the band and

music when the weather is fine, and you can watch the pretty girls from here. But you have been in Mexico—you know all that!" And he gave Phil a roguish dig.

"*Bien*, my friend, I am glad to meet you—" He held out his hand in welcome and De Lancey gave his in return. "My name," he continued, "is Juan de Dios Brachamonte y Escalon; but with these Americans that does not go, as you say, so in general they call me Don Juan.

"There is something about that name—I do not know—that makes the college boys laugh. Perhaps it is that poet, Byron, who wrote so scandalously about us Spaniards, but certainly he knew nothing of our language, for he rimes Don Juan with 'new one' and 'true one'! Still, I read part of that poem and it is, in places, very interesting—yes, *very* interesting—but 'Don Joo-an'! Hah!"

He threw up his hand in despair and De Lancey broke into a jollying laugh.

"Well, Don Juan," he cried, "I'm glad to meet you. My name is Philip De Lancey and my pardner here is Mr. Hooker. Shake hands with him, Don Juan de Dios! But certainly a man so devoutly named could never descend to reading *much* of Don Joo-an!"

"Ah, no," protested Don Juan, rolling his dark eyes and smiling rakishly, "not much—only the most in-ter-est-ing pas-sages!"

He saluted and disappeared in a roar of laughter, and De Lancey turned triumphantly on his companion, a self-satisfied smile upon his lips.

"Aha!" he said; "you see? That's what five dollars' worth of booze will do in opening up the way. Here's our old friend Don Juan willing, nay, anxious, to help us all he can—he sees I'm a live wire and wants to keep me around. Pretty soon we'll get him feeling good and he'll tell us all he knows. Don't you never try to make me sign the pledge again, brother—a few shots just gets my intellect to working right and I'm crafty as a fox.

"Did you notice that *coup* I made—asking him if he was a Spaniard? There's nothing in the world makes a Spaniard so mad as to take him for a Mexican—on the other hand, nothing makes him your friend for life like recognizing him for a blue-blooded Castilian. Now maybe our old friend Don Juan has got a few drops of Moorish blood in his veins—to put it po-

lately, but—" he raised his tenor voice and improvised—

"Jest because my hair is curly
Dat's no reason to call me 'Shine'!"

"No," agreed Bud, feeling cautiously of the walls, "and jest because you're happy is no reason for singing so loud, neither. These here partitions are made of inch boards, covered with paper—do you get that? Well, then, considering who's probably listening, it strikes me that Mr. Brachamonte is the real thing in Spanish gentlemen; and I've heard that all genuine Spaniards have their hair curly, jest like a—huh?"

But De Lancey, made suddenly aware of his indiscretion, was making all kinds of exaggerated signs for silence, and Bud stopped with a slow, good-natured smile.

"S-s-st!" hissed De Lancey, touching his finger to his lips; "don't say it—somebody might hear you!"

"All right," agreed Bud; "and don't you say it, either. I hate to knock, Phil," he added, "but sometimes I think the old man was right when he said you talk too much."

"Psst!" chided De Lancey, shaking his finger like a Mexican. Tiptoeing softly over to Bud, he whispered in his ear: "S-s-st, I can hear the feller in the next room—shaving himself!"

Laughing heartily at this joke, they went down-stairs for supper.

VI

If the Eagle Tail mine had been located in Arizona—or even farther down in Old Mexico—the method of jumping the claim would have been delightfully simple.

The title had lapsed, and the land had reverted to the government—all it needed in Arizona was a new set of monuments, a location notice at the discovery shaft, a pick and shovel thrown into the hole, and a few legal formalities.

But in Mexico it is different. Not that the legal formalities are lacking—far from it—but the whole theory of mines and mining is different. In Mexico a mining title is, in a way, a lease, a concession from the general government giving the *concessionnaire* the right to work a certain piece of ground and to hold it as long as he pays a mining tax of three dollars an acre per year.

But no final papers or patents are ever

issued, the possession of the surface of the ground does not go with the right to mine beneath it, and in certain parts of Mexico no foreigner can hold title to either mines or land.

A prohibited or frontier zone, eighty kilometers in width, lies along the international boundary line, and in that neutral zone no foreigner can denounce a mining claim and no foreign corporation can acquire a title to one. The Eagle Tail was just inside the zone.

But—there is always a "but" when you go to a good lawyer—while for purposes of war and national safety foreigners are not allowed to hold land along the line, they are at perfect liberty to hold stock in Mexican corporations owning property within the prohibited zone; and—here is where the graft comes in—they may even hold title in their own name if they first obtain express permission from the chief executive of the republic.

Not having any drag with the chief executive, and not caring to risk their title to the whims of succeeding administrations, Hooker and De Lancey, upon the advice of a mining lawyer in Gadsden, had organized themselves into the Eagle Tail Mining Company, under the laws of the republic of Mexico, with headquarters at Agua Negra. It was their plan to get some Mexican to locate the mine for them and then, for a consideration, transfer it to the company.

The one weak spot in this scheme was the Mexican. By trusting Aragon, Henry Kruger had not only lost title to his mine, but he had been outlawed from the republic. And now he had bestowed upon Hooker and De Lancey the task of finding an honest Mexican, and keeping him honest until he made the transfer.

While the papers were being made out there might be a great many temptations placed before that Mexican—either to keep the property for himself or to hold out for a bigger reward than had been specified. After his experience with the aristocratic Don Cipriano Aragon y Tres Palacios, Kruger was in favor of taking a chance on the lower classes. He had therefore recommended to them one Cruz Mendez, a wood vender whom he had known and befriended, as the man to play the part.

Cruz Mendez, according to Kruger, was hard-working, sober, and honest—for a

Mexican. He was also simple-minded and easy to handle, and was the particular man who had sent word that the Eagle Tail had at last been abandoned. And also he was easy to pick out, being a little, one-eyed man and going by the name of "El Tuerto."

So, in pursuance of their policy of playing a waiting game, Hooker and De Lancey hung around the hotel for several days, listening to the gossip of Don Juan de Dios and watching for one-eyed men with prospects to sell.

In Sonora he is a poor and unimaginative man indeed who has not at least one lost mine or "prospecto", to sell; and prosperous-looking strangers, riding through the country, are often beckoned aside by half-naked *paisanos* eager to show them the gold mines of the Spanish *padres* for a hundred dollars Mex.

It was only a matter of time, they thought, until Cruz Mendez would hunt them up and try to sell them the Eagle Tail; and it was their intention reluctantly to close the bargain with him, for a specified sum, and then stake him to the denouement fees and gain possession of the mine.

As this was a commonplace in the district—no Mexican having capital enough to work a claim and no American having the right to locate one—it was a very natural and inconspicuous way of jumping Señor Aragon y Tres Palacios's abandoned claim. If they discovered the lead immediately afterward it would pass for a case of fool's luck, or at least so they hoped, and, riding out a little each day and sitting on the hotel porch with Don Juan the rest of the time, they waited until patience seemed no longer a virtue.

"Don Juan," said De Lancey, taking up the probe at last, "I had a Mexican working for me when we were over in the Sierras—one of your real, old-time workers that had never been spoiled by an education—and he was always talking about 'La Fortuna.' I guess this was the place he meant, but it doesn't look like it—according to him it was a Mexican town. Maybe he's around here now—his name was Mendez."

"José Maria Mendez?" inquired Don Juan, who was a living directory of the place. "Ricardo? Pancho? Cruz?"

"Cruz!" cried De Lancey; "that was it!"

"He lives down the river a couple of miles," said Don Juan; "down at Old Fortuna."

"Old Fortuna!" repeated Phil. "I didn't know there was such a place."

"Why, my gracious!" exclaimed Don Juan de Dios, scandalized by such ignorance. "Do you mean to say you have been here three days and never heard about Fortuna Vieja? Why, *this* isn't Fortuna! This is an American mining camp—the old town is down below."

"That's where this man Aragon, the big Mexican of the country, has his ranch and store. Spanish? Him? No, indeed—*mitad*! He is half Spanish and half Yaqui Indian, but his wife is a pure Spaniard—one of the few in the country. Her father was from Madrid and she is a Villanueva—a very beautiful woman in her day, with golden hair and the presence of a queen!"

"No, *not* Irish! My goodness, you Americans think that everybody with red hair is Irish! Why, the most beautiful women in Madrid have chestnut hair as soft as the fur of a dormouse. It is the old Castilian hair, and they are proud of it. The Señora Aragon married beneath her station—it was in the City of Mexico, and she did not know that he was an Indian—but she is a very nice lady for all that and never omits to bow to me when she comes up to take the train. I remember one time—"

"Does Cruz Mendez work for him?" interjected De Lancey desperately.

"No, indeed!" answered Don Juan patiently; "he packs in wood from the hills—but as I was saying—" and from that he went on to tell of the unfailing courtesy of the Señora Aragon to a gentleman whom, whatever his present station might be, she recognized as a member of one of the oldest families in Castile.

De Lancey did not press his inquiries any further, but the next morning, instead of riding back into the hills, he and Bud turned their faces down the cañon to seek out the elusive Mendez. They had, of course, been acting a part for Don Juan, since Kruger had described Old Fortuna and the Señor Aragon with great minuteness.

And now, in the guise of innocent strangers, they rode on down the river, past the concentrator with its multiple tanks, its gliding tramway and mountains of tailings,

through the village of Indian houses stuck like dugouts against the barren hill—then along a river-bed that oozed with slickings until they came in sight of the town.

La Fortuna was an old town, yet not as old as its name, since two Fortunas before it had been washed away by cloudbursts and replaced by newer dwellings. The settlement itself was some four hundred years old, dating back to the days of the Spanish *conquistadores*, when it yielded up many mule-loads of gold.

The present town was built a little up from the river in the lee of a great ridge of rocks thrust down from the hill and well calculated to turn aside a glut of waters. It was a comfortable huddle of white-washed adobe buildings set on both sides of a narrow and irregular road—the great trail that led down to the hot country and was worn deep by the pack-trains of centuries.

On the lower side was the ample store and *cantina* of Don Cipriano, where the thirsty *arrieros* could get a drink and buy a *panoche* of sugar without getting down from their mounts. Behind the store were the pole corrals and adobe warehouses and the quarters for the peons, and across the road was the *mescal* still where, in huge copper retort and worm, the fiery liquor was distilled from the sugar-laden heads of Yuccas.

This was the town, but the most important building—set back in the shade of mighty cottonwoods and pleasantly aloof from the road—was the residence of Señor Aragon. It was this, in fact, which held the undivided attention of De Lancey as they rode quietly through the village, for he had become accustomed from a long experience in the tropics to look for something elusive, graceful, and feminine in houses set back in a garden. Nothing stirred, however, and having good reason to avoid Don Cipriano, they jogged steadily on their way.

"Some house!" observed Phil, with a last, hopeful look over his shoulder.

"Uh," assented Bud, as they came to a fork in the road. "Say," he continued, "let's turn off on this trail. Lot of burro tracks going out—expect it's our friend, Mr. Mendez."

"All right," said De Lancey absently; "wonder where old Aragon keeps that bee-utiful daughter of his—the one Don Joo-an was telling about. Have to stop on

the way back and sample the old man's *mescal*."

"Nothing doing!" countered Hooker instantly. "Now you heard what I told you—there's two things you leave alone for sixty days—booze and women. After we cinch our title you can get as gay as you please."

"Oo-ee!" piped Phil, "hear the boy talk!" But he said no more of wine and women, for he knew how they do complicate life.

They rode to the east now, following the long, flat footprints of the burros, and by all the landmarks Bud saw that they were heading straight for the old Eagle Tail mine. At Old Fortuna the river turns west and at the same time four cañons come in from the east and south. Of these they had taken the first to the north and it was leading them past all the old workings that Kruger had spoken about. In fact, they were almost at the mine when Hooker swung down suddenly from his horse and motioned Phil to follow.

"There's some burros coming," he said, glancing back significantly; and when the pack-train came by, each animal piled high with broken wood, the two Americans were busily tapping away at a section of country rock. A man and a boy followed behind the animals, gazing with wonder at the strangers, and as Phil bade them a pleasant "*Buenos días!*" they came to a halt and stared at their industry in silence. In the interval Phil was pleased to note that the old man had only one eye.

"*Que busca?*" the one-eyed one finally inquired; "what are you looking for?"

And when Phil oracularly answered, "Gold!" the old man made a motion to the boy to go on and sat down on a neighboring rock.

"Do you want to buy a prospect?" he asked, and Bud glanced up at him grimly.

"We find our own prospects," answered Phil.

"But I know of a very rich prospect," protested Mendez; "*very rich!*" He thrilled his voice to express how rich it was.

"Yes?" observed Phil; "then why don't you dig the gold out? But as for us, we find our own mines. That is our business."

"*Seguro!*" nodded Mendez, glancing at their outfit approvingly. "But I am a poor man—very poor—I cannot denounce the mine. So I wait for some rich Ameri-

can to come and buy it. I have a friend—a very rich man—in Gadsden, but he will not come; so I will sell it to you."

"Did you get that, Bud?" jested Phil in English. "The old man here thinks we're rich Americans and he wants to sell us a mine."

Bud laughed silently at this, and Mr. Mendez, his hopes somewhat blasted by their levity, began to boast of his find, giving the history of the Eagle Tail with much circumstantiality and explaining that it was a lost *padre* mine.

"Sure," observed Phil, going back to his horse and picking up the bridle, "that's what they all say. They're all lost *padre* mines, and you can see them from the door of the church. Come on, Bud, let's go!"

"And so you could this!" cried Mendez, running along after them as they rode slowly up the cañon, "from the old church that was washed away by the flood! This is the very mine where the *padres* dug out all their gold! Are you going up this way? Come, then, and I will show you—the very place, except that the *Americano* ruined it with a blast!"

He tagged along after them, wheedling and protesting while they bantered him about his mine, until they finally came to the place—the ruins of the old Eagle Tail.

It lay spraddled out along the hillside, a series of gopher-holes, dumps, and abandoned workings, looking more like a badly managed stone-quarry than a relic of *padre* days. Kruger's magazine of giant powder, exploded in one big blast, had destroyed all traces of his mine, besides starting an avalanche of loose shale that had poured down and filled the pocket.

Added to this, Aragon and his men had rooted around in the debris in search of the vein, and the story of their inefficient work was told by great piles of loose rock stacked up beside caved-in trenches and a series of timid tunnels driven into the neighboring ridges.

Under the circumstances it would certainly call for a mining engineer to locate the lost lead, and De Lancey looked it over thoughtfully as he began to figure on the work to be done. Undoubtedly there was a mine there—and the remains of an old Spanish smelter down the creek showed that the ground had once been very rich—but if Kruger had not told him in advance he would have passed up the job in a minute.

"Well," he said, turning coldly upon the fawning Mendez, who was all curves in his desire to please, "where is your prospect?"

"*Aquí, señor!*" replied the Mexican, pointing to the disrupted rockslide. "Here it was that the *Americano* Crooka had his mine—rich with gold—*much* gold!"

He shrilled his voice emphatically, and De Lancey shrilled his in reply.

"Here?" he exclaimed, gazing blankly at the hillside, and then he broke into a laugh. "All right, my friend," he said, giving Bud a facetious wink; "how much do you want for this prospect?"

"Four hundred dollars," answered Mendez in a tone at once hopeful and apologetic. "It is very rich. Señor Crooka shipped some ore that was full of gold. I packed it out for him on my burros; but, I am sorry, I have no piece of it!"

"Yes," responded De Lancey, "I am sorry, too. So, of course, we cannot buy the prospect since you have no ore to show; but I am glad for this, Señor Mendez," he continued with a kindly smile; "it shows that you are an honest man, or you would have stolen a piece of ore from the sacks. So show us now where the gold was found, the nearest that you can remember, and perhaps, if we think we can find it, we will pay you to denounce the claim for us."

At this the one good eye of Cruz Mendez lighted up with a great hope and, skipping lightly over the rock-piles with his sandaled feet, he ran to a certain spot, locating it by looking across the cañon and up and down the creek.

"Here, señores," he pronounced, "is where the mouth of the old tunnel came out. Standing inside it I could see that tree over there, and looking down the river I could just see the smelter around the point. So, then, the gold must be in there." He pointed toward the hill.

"Surely," said De Lancey; "but where?"

The old Mexican shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly.

"I do not know, señor," he answered; "but if you wish to dig I will denounce the claim for you."

"For how much?" inquired De Lancey guardedly.

"For one hundred dollars," answered Mendez, and to his delight the American seemed to be considering it. He walked

back and forth across the slide, picking up rocks and looking at them, dropping down into the futile trenches of Aragon, and frowning with studious thought. His pardner, however, sat listlessly on a boulder and tested the action of his six-shooter.

"Listen, my friend," said De Lancey, coming back and poising his finger impressively. "If I should find the ledge the one hundred dollars would be nothing to me, *sabe*? And if I should spend all my money for nothing it would be but one hundred dollars more. But listen! I have known some false Mexicans who, when an American paid them to denounce a mine, took advantage of his kindness and refused to give it over. Or, if it turned out to be rich, they pulled a long face and claimed that they ought to be paid more. Now if—"

"Ah, no, no, *señor*!" clamored Mendez, holding up his hand in protest; "I am a poor man, but I am honest. Only give me the hundred dollars—"

"Not a dollar do you get!" cried De Lancey sternly; "not a dollar—until you turn over the concession to the mine. And if you play us false"—he paused impressively—"cuidado, hombre—look out!"

Once more Cruz Mendez protested his honesty and his fidelity to any trust, but De Lancey silenced him impatiently.

"Enough, hombre!" he said. "Words are nothing to us. Do you see my friend over there?" He pointed to Bud who, huge and dominating against the sky-line, sat toying with his pistol. "*Buen*! He is a cowboy, *sabe*? A Texan! You know the *Tejanos*, eh? They do not like Mexicans. But my friend there, he likes Mexicans—when they are honest. If not—no! Hey, Bud," he called in English, "what would you do to this fellow if he beat us out of the mine?"

Bud turned upon them with a slow, good-natured smile.

"Oh, nothing much," he answered, putting up his gun; and the deep rumble of his voice struck fear into the old man's heart.

Phil laughed and looked grimly at Mendez while he delivered his ultimatum.

"Very well, my friend," he said. "We will stay and look at this mine. If we think it is good we will take you to the mining agent and get a permit to dig. For sixty days we will dig, and if we find

nothing we will pay you fifty dollars, anyway. If we find the ledge we will give you a hundred dollars. All right?"

"*Si, señor, si, señor!*" cried Mendez, "one hundred dollars!"

"When you give us the papers!" warned Phil. "But remember—be careful! The Americans do not like men who talk. And come to the hotel at Fortuna to-morrow—then we will let you know."

"And you will buy the mine?" begged Mendez, backing off with his hat in his hand.

"Perhaps," answered De Lancey. "We will tell you to-morrow."

"*Buen*!" bowed Mendez; "and many thanks!"

"It is nothing," replied De Lancey politely, and then with a crooked smile he gazed after the old man as he went hurrying off down the cañon.

"Well," he observed, "I guess we've got Mr. Mendez started just about right—what? Now if we can keep him without the price of a drink until we get our papers we stand a chance to win."

"That's right," said Bud; "but I wish he had two good eyes. I knowed a one-eyed Mex up in Arizona and he was sure a thieving son of a goat."

VII

THERE are doubtless many philanthropists in the Back Bay regions of Boston who would consider the whipsawing of Cruz Mendez a very reprehensible act. And one hundred dollars Mex was certainly a very small reward for the service that he was to perform.

But Bud and Phil were not traveling for any particular uplift society, and one hundred pesos was a lot of money to Cruz Mendez. More than that, if they had offered him a thousand dollars for the same service he would have got avaricious and demanded ten thousand.

He came to the hotel very early the next morning and lingered around an hour or so, waiting for the American gentlemen to arise and tell him his fate. A hundred dollars would buy everything that he could think of, including a quantity of *mescal*. His throat dried at the thought of it.

Then the gentlemen appeared and asked him many questions—whether he was married according to law, whether his wife would sign the papers with him, and if he believed in a hereafter for those who

played false with Americans. Having answered all these in the affirmative, he was taken to the *agente mineral*, and, after signing his name—his one feat in penmanship—to several imposing documents, he was given the precious permit.

Then there was another trip to the grounds with a surveyor, to make report that the claim was actually vacant, and Mendez went back to his normal duties as a packer.

In return for this service as a dummy locator, and to keep him under their eye, the Americans engaged El Tuerto, the one-eyed, to pack out a few tools and supplies for them; and then, to keep him busy, they employed him further to build a stone house.

All these activities were, of course, not lost on Don Cipriano Aragon y Tres Palacios, since, by a crafty arrangement of fences, he had made it impossible for any one to reach the lower country without passing through the crooked street of Old Fortuna.

During the first and the second trip of the strange Americans he kept within his dignity, hoping perhaps that they would stop at his store, where they could be engaged in conversation; but upon their return from a third trip, after Cruz Mendez had gone through with their supplies, he cast his proud Spanish reserve to the winds and waylaid them on the street.

"*Buenas tardes, señores,*" he saluted, as they rode past his store, and then, seeing that they did not break their gait, he held up his hand for them to stop.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," he said, speaking genially but with an affected Spanish lisp, "I have seen you ride past several times—are you working for the big company up at New Fortuna?"

"No, *señor,*" answered De Lancey courteously, "we are working for ourselves."

"Good!" responded Aragon with fatherly approval; "it is better so. And are you looking at mines?"

"Yes," said De Lancey non-committally; "we are looking at mines."

"That is good, too," observed Aragon; "and I wish you well, but since you are strangers to this country and perhaps do not know the people as well as some, I desire to warn you against that one-eyed man, Cruz Mendez, with whom I have seen you riding. He is a worthless fellow—a very

pela'o Mexican, one who has nothing—and yet he is always seeking to impose upon strangers by selling them old mines which have no value.

"I have no desire to speak ill of my neighbors, but since he has moved into the brush house up the river I have lost several fine little pigs; and his eye, as I know, was torn from his head as he was chasing another man's cow. I have not suffered him on my ranch for years, he is such a thief, and yet he has the effrontery to represent himself to strangers as a poor but honest man. I hope that he has not imposed upon you in any way?"

"No; not at all, thank you," responded De Lancey, as Bud raised his bridle-reins to go. "We hired him to pack out our tools and supplies and he has done it very reasonably. But many thanks, sir, for your warning. *Adios!*"

He touched his hat and waved his hand in parting, and Bud grinned as he settled down to a trot.

"You can't help palavering 'em, can you, Phil?" he said. "No matter what you think about 'em, you got to be polite, haven't you? Well, that's the way you get drawn in—next time you go by now the old man will pump you dry—you see. No, sir, the only way to get along with these Mexicans is not to have a thing to do with 'em. 'No savvy'—that's my motto!"

"Well, '*muchas gracias*' is mine," observed De Lancey. "It doesn't cost anything, and it buys a whole lot."

"Sure," agreed Bud; "but we ain't buying nothing from him—he's the one particular *hombre* we want to steer clear of, and keep him guessing as long as we can. That's my view of it, pardner."

"Oh, that's all right," laughed De Lancey, "he won't get anything out of me—that is, nothing but a bunch of hot air. Say, he's a shrewd-looking old guinea, isn't he? Did you notice that game eye? He kept it kind of drooped, almost shut, until he came to the point—and then he opened it up real fierce. Reminds me of a big fighting owl waking up in the daytime. But you just watch me handle him, and if I don't fool the old boy at every turn it'll be because I run out of bull."

"Well, you can hand him the bull if you want to," grumbled Bud, "but the first time you give anything away I'm going to pick such a row with the old cuss that we'll have to make a new trail to get by.

So leave 'im alone, if you ever expect to see that girl!"

A close association with Phil De Lancey had left Bud not unaware of his special weaknesses, and Phil was undoubtedly romantic. Given a barred and silent house, shut off from the street by whitened walls and a veranda screened with flowers, and the questing eyes of Mr. De Lancey would turn to those barred windows as certainly as the needle seeks the pole.

On every trip, coming and going, he had conned the Aragon house from the vine-covered *corredor* in front to the walled-in summer-garden behind, hoping to surprise a view of the beautiful daughter of the house. And unless rumor and Don Juan were at fault, she was indeed worthy of his solicitude—a gay and sprightly creature, brown-eyed like her mother and with the same glorious chestnut hair.

Already those dark, mischievous eyes had been busy and, at the last big dance at Fortuna, she had set many heads awheel. Twice within two years her father, in a rage, had sent her away to school in order to break off some ill-considered love-affair; and now a battle royal was being waged between Manuel del Rey, the dashing captain of the *rurales* stationed at Fortuna, and Feliz Luna, son of a rich *haciendado* down in the hot country, for the honor of her hand.

What more romantic, then, than that a handsome American, stepping gracefully into the breach, should keep the haughty lovers from slaying each other by bearing off the prize himself?

So reasoned Philip De Lancey, musing upon the ease with which he could act the part; but for prudential purposes he said nothing of his vaunting ambitions, knowing full well that they would receive an active veto from Bud.

For, while De Lancey did most of the talking, and a great deal of the thinking for the partnership, Hooker was not lacking in positive opinions; and upon sufficient occasion he would express himself, though often with more force than delicacy. Therefore, upon this unexpected sally about the girl, Phil changed the subject abruptly and said no more of Aragon or the hopes within his heart.

It was not so easy, however, to avoid Aragon, for that gentleman had apparently taken the pains to inform himself as to the place where they were at work, and he was

waiting for them in the morning with a frown as black as a thunder-cloud.

"He's on!" muttered Phil, as they drew near enough to see his face. "What shall we do?"

"Do nothing," growled Bud through his teeth; "you jest let me do the talking!"

He maneuvered his horse adroitly and, with a skilful turn, cut in between his pardner and Aragon.

"*S días*," he greeted, gazing down in burly defiance at the militant Aragon; and at the same moment he gave De Lancey's horse a furtive touch with his spur.

"*Buenos días, señores!*" returned Aragon, striding forward to intercept them; but as neither of the Americans looked back, he was left standing in the middle of the street.

"That's the way to handle 'im," observed Hooker, as they trotted briskly down the lane. "Leave 'im to me!"

"It'll only make him mad," objected De Lancey crossly. "What do you want to do that for?"

"He's mad already," answered Bud. "I want to quarrel with him, so he can't ask us any questions. Get him so mad he won't talk—then it'll be a fair fight and none of this snake-in-the-grass business."

"Yes, but don't put it on him," protested De Lancey. "Let him be friendly for a while, if he wants to."

"Can't be friends," said Bud laconically; "we jumped his claim."

"Maybe he doesn't want it," suggested Phil hopefully. "He's dropped a lot of money on it."

"You bet he wants it," returned Hooker, with conviction. "I'm going to camp out there—the old boy is liable to jump us."

"Aw, you're crazy, Bud!" cried Phil; but Hooker only smiled.

"You know what happened to Kruger," he answered. "I'll tell you what, we got to keep our eye open around here."

They rode on to their mine, which was only about five miles from Fortuna, without discussing the matter further; for, while Phil had generally been the leader, in this particular case Kruger had put Bud in charge, and he seemed determined to have his way so far as Aragon was concerned. In the ordering of supplies and the laying out of development work he deferred to Phil in everything, but for tactics he preferred his own judgment.

It was by instinct rather than reason

that he chose to fight, and people who follow their instincts are hard to change. So they put in the day in making careful measurements, according to the memoranda that Kruger had given them; and, having satisfied themselves as to the approximate locality of the lost vein, they turned back again toward town with their heads full of cunning schemes.

Since it was the pleasure of the Señor Aragon to make war on all who entered his preserves, they checkmated any attempt on his part to locate the lead by driving stakes to the north of their ledge; and, still further to throw him off, they decided to mark time for a while by doing dead work on a cut. Such an approach would be needed to reach the mouth of their tunnel.

At the same time it would give steady employment to Mendez and keep him under their eye, and as soon as Aragon showed his hand they could make out their final papers in peace and send them to the City of Mexico.

And not until those final papers were recorded and the transfer duly made would they so much as stick a pick into the hillside or show a lump of quartz.

But for a Spanish gentleman, supposed to be all supple curves and sinuous advance, Don Cipriano turned out somewhat of a surprise, for when they rode back through his narrow street again he met them squarely in the road and called them to a halt.

"By what right, gentlemen—" he demanded in a voice tremulous with rage, "—by what right do you take possession of my mine, upon which I have paid the taxes all these years, and conspire with that rogue, Cruz Mendez, to cheat me out of it? It is mine, I tell you, no matter what the *agente mineral* may say, and—"

"Your mine, nothing!" broke in Hooker scornfully, speaking in the ungrammatical border-Mexican of the cowboys. "We meet one Mexican—he shows us the mine—that is all. The expert of the mining agent says it is vacant—we take it. *Starvamo!*"*

He waved the matter aside with masterful indifference, and Aragon burst into a torrent of excited Spanish.

"Very likely, very likely," commented Bud dryly, without listening to a word; "*sí, señor, yo pienso!*"

A wave of fury swept over the Spaniard's face at this gibe and he turned suddenly to De Lancey.

"Señor," he said, "you seem to be a gentleman. Perhaps you will listen to me. This mine upon which you are working is mine. I have held it for years, seeking for the lost vein of the old *padres*. Then the rebels came sweeping through the land. They stole my horses, they drove off my cattle, they frightened my workmen from the mine. I was compelled to flee—myself and my family—to keep from being held for ransom. Now you do me the great injustice to seize my mine!"

"Ah, no, *señor*," protested De Lancey, waving his finger politely for silence, "you are mistaken. We have inquired about this mine and it has been vacant for some time. There is no vein—no gold. Any one who wished could take it. While we were prospecting we met this poor one-eyed man and he has taken out a permit to explore it. So we are going to dig—that is all."

"But, *señor!*" burst out Aragon—and he voiced his rabid protests again, while sudden faces appeared in the windows and wide-eyed peons stood gawking in a crowd. But De Lancey was equally firm, though he glimpsed for the first time the adorable face of La Gracia as she stared at him from behind the bars.

"No, *señor*," he said, "you are mistaken. The land was declared forfeit for non-payment of taxes by the minister of Fomento and thrown open for location. We have located it—that is all."

For a minute Don Cipriano stood looking at him, his black eyes heavy with rage; then his anger seemed to fall away from him and he wiped the sweat from his brow.

"Very well," he said at last, "I perceive that you are a gentleman and have acted in good faith—it is only that that fellow Mendez has deceived you. Let it pass, then—I will not quarrel with you, my friend—it is the fortune of war. But stop at my store when you go by and come and see me. It is indeed lonely here at times, and perhaps I can pass a pleasant hour with you. My name, *señor*, is Don Cipriano Aragon y Tres Palacios—and yours?"

He held out his hand with a little gesture.

"Philip De Lancey," replied that gentleman, clasping the proffered hand; and with

*A shortening of *está bueno*—it is good—a common expression in cowboy Spanish.



THROUGH THE SHUTTERS GRACIA WAVED HIM GOOD NIGHT

[See page 348]

many expressions of good-will and esteem, with a touching of hats and a wiggling of fingers from the distance, they parted, in spite of Bud, the best of friends.

VIII

THERE are some people in this world with whom it seems impossible to quarrel, notably the parents of attractive daughters.

Perhaps, if Gracia Aragon had not been watching him from the window, Philip De Lancey would not have been quite so cordial with her father—at least, that was what Hooker thought, and he was so badly peeved at the way things had gone that he said it, too.

Then, of course, they quarreled, and, one thing leading to another, Phil told Bud he had a very low way of speaking. Bud replied that, whatever his deficiencies of speech might be, he was not fool enough to be drawn in by a skirt, and Phil rebuked him again. Then, with a scornful grunt, Bud Hooker rode on in silence and they said no more about it.

It was a gay life that they led at night, for the Fortuna Hotel was filled with men of their kind, since all the staid married men had either moved across the line with their families or were under orders to come straight home.

In the daytime the hotel was nearly deserted, for every man in town was working for the company; but in the evening, when they gathered around the massive stove, it was a merry company indeed.

There were college men, full of good stories and stories not so good, world-wanderers and adventurers with such tales of the East and West as never have been written in books. But not a college boy could match stories with Phil De Lancey, and few wanderers there were who could tell him anything new about Mexico. Also, when it came to popular songs, he knew both the words and the tune. So he was much in demand, and Don Juan passed many drinks across the bar because of him.

In all such festivities the two pardners stayed together; Bud, with a broad, indulgent grin, listening to the end, and Phil, his eyes alight with liquor and good cheer, talking and laughing far into the night.

Outside the winter winds were still cold and the Mexicans went wrapped to the eyebrows; but within the merry company was slow to quit, and Phil, making up for the

lonely months when he had entirely lacked an audience, sat long in the seat of honor and was always the last to go.

But on the evening after their spat Bud sat off to one side, and even Phil's sprightly and ventriloquistic conversation with the little-girl-behind-the-door called forth only a fleeting smile.

Bud was thinking, and when engaged in that arduous occupation even the saucy little girl behind the door could not beguile him.

But, after he had studied it all out and come to a definite conclusion, he did not deliver an ultimatum. The old, good-natured smile simply came back to his rugged face; he rolled a cigarette; and then for the rest of the evening he lay back and enjoyed the show. Only in the morning, when they went out to the corral to get their horses, he carried his war-bag with him and, after throwing the saddle onto Copper Bottom, he did the same for their spare mount.

"What are you going to pack out, Bud?" inquired Phil, and Bud slapped his canvas-covered bed for an answer. Then, with a heave, he snaked it out of the harness-room where it had been stored and slung it deftly across the pack-saddle.

"Why, what's the matter?" said De Lancey, when they were on their way; "don't you like the hotel?"

"Hotel's fine," conceded Bud, "but I reckon I'd better camp out at the mine. Want to keep my eye on that Mexican of ours."

"Aw, he's all right!" protested Phil.

"Sure," said Bud; "I ain't afraid he'll steal something—but he might take a notion to quit the country."

"Why, what for?" challenged De Lancey. "He's got his wife and family here."

"That's nothing—to a Mexican!" countered Bud. "But I ain't figuring on the excuse he'd give—that won't buy me nothing—what I want to do is to keep him from going. Because if we lose that Mex now, we lose our mine."

"And—"

"No 'and' to it," said Bud doggedly. "We ain't going to lose him."

"But if we did," persisted De Lancey, "why, then you think—"

"Your friend would get it," finished Hooker grimly.

"Ah, I see," nodded De Lancey, noting

the accent on "friend." "You don't approve of my making friends with Aragon."

"Oh, that's all right," shrugged the big cowboy; "it won't make no difference now. Go ahead, if you want to."

"You mean you can get along without me?"

"No," answered Bud, "I don't mean nothing—except what I say. If you want to palaver around with Aragon, go to it. I'll round up Mendez and his family and keep 'em right there at the mine until we get them papers signed—after that I don't care what happens."

"Oh, all right," murmured De Lancey in a subdued tone; but if his conscience smote him for the moment it did not lead to the making of any sentimental New Year's resolutions, for he stopped when he came to the store and exchanged salutations with Aragon, who was lounging expectantly before his door.

"*Buenos días*, Don Cipriano!" he hailed. "How are you this morning?"

"Ah, good morning, Don Felipe," responded Aragon, stepping forth from the shadow of the door. "I am very well. thank you—and you?"

"The same!" answered Phil, as if it were a great piece of news. "It is fine weather—no?"

"Yes, but a little dry!" said Aragon, and so they passed it back and forth in the accepted Spanish manner, while Bud hooked one leg over the horn of his saddle and regarded the *hacienda* with languid eyes.

But as his gaze swept the length of the vine-covered *corredor* it halted for a moment and a slow smile came over his face. In the green depths of a passion-flower vine he had detected a quick, birdlike motion; and then suddenly, like a transformation scene, he beheld a merry face, framed and illuminated by soft, golden locks, peering out at him from among the blossoms. Except for that brief smile he made no sign that he saw her, and when he looked up again the face had disappeared.

Don Cipriano showed them about his *mescal* plant, where his men kept a continual stream of liquid fire running from the copper worm, and gave each a raw drink; but though De Lancey gazed admiringly at the house and praised the orange-trees that hung over the garden wall, Spanish hospitality could go no far-

ther, and the visit ended in a series of *adioses* and *muchas gracias*.

"Quick work!" commented Phil, as they rode toward the mine; "the old man has got over his grouch."

"Um," mused Bud, with a quiet, brooding smile; and the next time he rode into town he looked for the masked face among the flowers and smiled again. That was the way Gracia Aragon affected them all.

He did not point out the place to Phil, nor betray her by any sign. All he did was to glance at her once and then ride on his way, but somehow his heart stood still when he met her eyes, and his days became filled with a pensive, brooding melancholy.

"What's the matter, Bud?" rallied Phil, after he had jollied him for a week; "you're getting mighty quiet lately. Got another hunch—like that one you had up at Agua Negra?"

"Nope," grinned Bud; "but I'll tell you one thing—if old Aragon don't spring something pretty soon I'm going to get uneasy. He's too dog-goned good-natured about this."

"Maybe he thinks we're stuck," suggested De Lancey.

"Well, he's awful happy about something," said Bud. "I can see by the way he droops that game eye of his—and smiles that way—that he knows we're working for him. If we don't get a title to this mine, every tap of work we do on it is all to the good for him, that's a cinch. So sit down now and think it out—where's the joker?"

"Well," mused Phil, "the gold is here somewhere. He knows we're not fooled there. And he knows we're right after it, the way we're driving this cut in. Our permit is good—he hasn't tried to buffalo Mendez—and it's a cinch he can't denounce the claim himself."

"Maybe he figures on letting us do all the work and pay all the denouncement fees and then spring something big on old One-Eye," propounded Bud. "Scare 'im up or buy 'im off, and have him transfer the title to *him*. That's the way he worked Kruger."

"Well, say," urged Phil, "let's go ahead with our denouncement before he starts something. Besides, the warm weather is coming on now, and if we don't get a move on we're likely to get run out by the *revoltosos*."

"Nope," said Bud; "I don't put this into Mendez's hands until I know he's our man—and if I ever do go ahead I'll keep him under my six-shooter until the last paper is signed, believe me. I know we're in bad somewhere, but hurrying up won't help none."

"Now I tell you what we'll do—you go to the mining agent and get copies of all our papers and send them up to that Gadsden lawyer. I'm going to go down and board with Mendez and see if I can read his heart."

So they separated, and while Phil stayed in town to look over the records Bud ate his beans and *tortillas* with the Mendez family.

They were a happy little family, comfortably installed in the stone house that Mendez had built, and rapidly getting fat on three full meals a day. From his tent farther up the cañon Bud could look down and watch the children at play and see the comely Indian wife as she cooked by the open fire.

Certainly no one could be more innocent and contented than she was, and El Tuerto was all bows and protestations of gratitude. And yet, you never can tell.

Bud had moved out of the new house to furnish quarters for El Tuerto and had favored him in every way; but this same consideration might easily be misinterpreted, for the Mexicans are slow to understand kindness.

So, while on the one hand he had treated them generously, he had always kept his distance, lest they be tempted to presume. But now, with Phil in town for a few days, he took his meals with Maria, who was too awed to say a word, and made friends with the dogs and the children.

The way to the dog's heart was easy, almost direct, and he finally won the attention of little Pancho and Josefa with a well-worn Sunday supplement. This gaudy institution, with its spicy stories and startling illustrations, had penetrated even to the wilds of Sonora, and every Sunday as regularly as the paper came Bud sat down and had his laugh over the funny page.

But to Pancho, who was six years old and curious, this same highly colored sheet was a mystery of mysteries, and when he saw the big American laughing he crept up and looked at it wistfully.

"Mira," said Bud, laying his finger

upon the smirking visage of one of the comic characters, "look, and I will tell you the story."

And so, with laborious care, he translated the colored fun, while the little Mendezes squirmed with excitement and leaped with joy. Even the simple souls of El Tuerto and Maria were moved by the *comicas*, and Mendez became so interested that he learned the words by heart, the better to explain them to others.

But as for Mexican treachery, Bud could find none of it. In fact, finding them so simple-hearted and good-natured, he became half ashamed of his early suspicions and waited for the return of Phil to explain Don Cipriano's complacency.

But the next Sunday, as Bud lay reading in his tent, the mystery solved itself. Cruz Mendez came up from the house, hat in hand and an apologetic smile on his face, and after the customary roundabout remarks he asked the boss as a favor if he would lend him the page of comic pictures.

"Seguro!" assented Bud, rolling over and fumbling for the funny sheet; then, failing to find it instantly, he inquired: "What do you want it for?"

"Ah, to show to my boy!" explained El Tuerto, his one eye lighting up with pride. "Who—Pancho?"

"Ah, no, *señor*," answered Mendez simply, "my boy in La Fortuna, the one you have not seen."

Bud stopped fumbling for the paper and sat up suddenly. Here was a new light on their faithful servitor, and one that might easily take away from his value as a dummy locator.

"Oh!" he said, and then: "How many children have you, Cruz?"

Cruz smiled deprecatingly, as parents will, and turned away.

"By which woman?" he inquired, and Bud became suddenly very calm, fearing the worst. For if Cruz was not legally married to Maria, he could not transfer the mining claim.

"By all of them," he said quietly.

"Five in all," returned Cruz—"three by Maria, as you know—two by my first woman—and one other. I do not count him."

"Well, you one-eyed old reprobate!" muttered Bud in his throat, but he passed it off and returned smiling to the charge.

"Where does your boy live now?" he asked with flattering solicitude, the better

to make him talk, "and is he old enough to understand the pictures?"

"Ah, yes!" beamed Mendez, "he is twelve years old. He lives with his mother now—and my little daughter, too. Their *mama* is the woman of the *mayordomo* of the Señor Aragon—a bad man, very ugly—she is not married to him."

"But with you—" suggested Bud, regarding him with a steely stare.

"Only by the judge!" explained Mendez virtuously. "It was a love-match, and the priest did not come—so we were married by the judge. Then this bad *mayordomo* stole her away from me—the pig—and I married Maria instead. Maria is a good woman and I married her before the priest—but I love my other children, too, even though they are not lawful."

"So you married your first wife before the judge," observed Bud cynically, "and this one before the priest. But how could you do that, unless you had been divorced?"

"Ah, *señor*," protested Mendez, holding out his hands, "you do not understand. It is only the church that can really marry—the judge does it only for the money. Maria is my true wife—and we have three nice children—but as I am going through La Fortuna I should like to show the picture paper to my boy."

Bud regarded him in meditative silence, then he rose up and began a determined search for the funny sheet.

"All right," he said, handing it over, "and here is a *panoche* of sugar for your little girl—the one in La Fortuna. It is nothing," he added, as Mendez began his thanks.

"But oh, you marrying Mexican," he continued, relapsing into his mother tongue as El Tuerto disappeared; "you certainly have dished us right!"

IX

Not the least of the causes which have brought Mexico to the brink of the abyss is the endless quarrel between church and state, which has almost destroyed the sanctity of marriage and left, besides, a pitiful heritage of deserted women and fatherless children as its toll.

Many an honest laborer has peoned himself to pay the priest for his marriage, only to be told that it is not legal in the eyes of the law; and many another, married by the judge, has been gravely in-

formed by the *padre* that the woman is only his mistress, and the children born out of wedlock.

So that now, to be sure that she is wedded, a woman must be married twice, and many a couple, on account of the prohibitive fees, are never married at all.

Cruz Mendez was no different from the men of his class, and he believed honestly that he was married to the comely Maria; but Hooker could have enlightened him on that point if he had cared to do it.

Bud was playing a game, with the Eagle Tail mine for a stake; and, being experienced at poker, he stood pat and studied his hand. Without doubt Mendez had lost his usefulness as a locator of the mine, since Maria was not his legal wife and could not sign the transfer papers as such. According to the law of the land, the woman now living with Aragon's *mayordomo* was the "legitimate" wife of the contract, and she alone could release title to the mine once Mendez denounced the claim.

But Mendez had not yet denounced the claim—though for a period of some thirty days yet he had the exclusive privilege of doing so—and Bud did not intend that he should.

Meanwhile they must walk softly, leaving Aragon to still hug the delusion that he would soon, through his *mayordomo*, have them in his power—and when the full sixty days of Cruz Mendez's mining permit had expired they could locate the mine again.

But how—and through whom? That was the question that Bud was studying upon when Phil rode up the trail, and in his abstraction he barely returned his gay greeting.

"Well, cheer up, old top!" cried De Lancey, throwing his bridle-reins to the ground and striding up to the tent. "What ho, let down the portcullis, me lord senechal! And cease your vain repining, Algernon—our papers are all O. K. and the lawyer says to go ahead. But that isn't half the news! Say, we had a dance up at the hotel last night and I met—"

"Yes—sure you did," broke in Bud; "but listen to this!" And he told him of El Tuerto's matrimonial entanglements.

"Why, the crooked devil!" exclaimed De Lancey, leaping up at the finish. "*Oyez!* Mendez!"

"Don't say a word," warned Bud, springing to the tent door to intercept him,

"or you'll put us out of business! It is nothing," he continued in Spanish as Mendez came out of his house, "but put Don Felipe's horse in the corral when he is cool."

"*Sí, señor*—with great pleasure!" smirked Mendez, running to get the horse, and after he had departed Bud turned back and shook his head.

"We can't afford to quarrel with Mr. Mendez," he said; "because if Aragon ever gets hold of him we're ditched. Jest let everything run on like we'd overlooked something until the sixty days are up—then, if we get away with it, we'll locate the mine ourselves."

"Yes; but how?"

"Well, they's two ways," returned Bud; "either hunt up another Mexican citizen or turn Mexican ourselves."

"Turn Mexican!" shrilled Phil, and then he broke down and laughed. "Well, you're a great one, Bud," he chortled; "you sure are!"

"I come down here to get this mine," said Bud laconically.

"Yes, but you're a Texan—or was one!"

"That makes no difference," answered Bud stoutly. "The hot weather is coming on—revolution is likely to begin any time—and there ain't a single Mexican we can trust. Jest one more break now and we lose out—now how about it?"

"Who's going to turn Mexican?" questioned De Lancey, "you or me?"

"Well—I will, then!"

"No, you won't, either!" cried Phil, forgetting his canny shrewdness. "I'll do it myself! I'm half Mexican already, I've been eating chili so long!"

"Now here," began Bud, "listen to me. I've been thinking this over all day and you jest heard about it. The man that turns Mexican is likely to get mixed up with the authorities and have to skip the country, but the other feller is in the other way—he's got to stay with the works till hell freezes over.

"Now you're an engineer and you know how to open up a mine—I don't. So, if you say so, I'll take out the papers and you hold the mine—or if you want to you can turn Mex."

"Well," said De Lancey, his voice suddenly becoming soft and pensive, "I might as well tell you, Bud, that I'm thinking of settling in this country, anyway. Of

course, I don't look at Aragon the way you do—I think you are prejudiced and misjudge him—but ever since I've known Gracia I've—"

"Gracia!" repeated Bud; and then, stirred by some great and unreasoning anger, he rose up and threw down his hat pettishly. "I'd think, Phil," he muttered, "you'd be satisfied with all the other girls in the world without—"

"Now here!" shouted Phil, rising as unreasoningly to his feet, "don't you say another word against that girl, or I'll—"

"Shut your mouth, you little shrimp!" bellowed Bud, wheeling upon him menacingly. "You seem to think you're the only man in the world that—"

"Oh, slush, Bud!" cried Phil in disgust, "you don't mean to tell me you're in love with Gracia too!"

"Who—me?" demanded Hooker, his face suddenly becoming fixed and mask-like; and then he laughed hoarsely in derision and sank down on the bed.

Certainly, of the two of them, he was the more surprised at his sudden outbreak of passion; and yet when the words were spoken he was quick to know that they were true.

Undoubtedly, in his own way, he was in love—but he would never admit it, that he knew, too. So he sank down on the blankets and swore harshly, while De Lancey stared at him in unfeigned surprise.

"Well, then," he went on, taking Bud's answer for granted, "what're you making such a row about? Can't I go to a dance with a girl without you jumping down my throat?"

"W'y, sure you can!" rumbled Bud, now hot with a new indignation; "but after getting me to go into this deal against my will and swearing me to some damn-fool pledge, the first thing you do is to make friends with Aragon and then make love to his daughter. Is that your idea of helping things along? D'ye think that's the way a pardner ought to act? No, I tell you, it is not!"

"Aw, Bud," protested De Lancey plaintively, "what's the matter with you? Be reasonable, old man; I never meant to hurt your feelings!"

"Hurt my feelings!" echoed Hooker scornfully. "Huh, what are we down here for, anyway—a Sunday-school picnic? My feelings are nothing, and they can wait; but we're sitting on a mine that's worth a

million dollars mebbe—and it ain't ours, either—and when you throw in with old Aragon and go to making love to his daughter you know you're not doing right! That's all there is to it—you're doing me and Kruger dirt!"

"Well, Bud," said De Lancey with mock gravity, "if that's the way you feel about it I won't do it any more!"

"I wish you wouldn't," breathed Bud, raising his head from his hands; "it sure wears me out, Phil, worrying about it."

"Well, then, I won't do it," protested Phil sincerely. "So that's settled—now who's going to turn Mexican citizen?"

"Suit yourself," said Bud listlessly.

"I'll match you for it!" proposed De Lancey, diving into his pocket for money.

"Don't need to," responded Bud; "you can do what you please."

"No; I'll match you!" persisted Phil. "That was the agreement—whenever it was an even break we'd let the money talk. Here's your quarter—and if I match you I'll become the Mexican citizen. All set? Let 'er go!"

He flipped the coin into the air and caught it in his hand.

"Heads!" he called, without looking at it. "What you got?"

"Heads!" answered Bud, and Phil chucked his money into the air again and laughed as it dropped into his palm.

"Heads she is again!" he cried, showing the Mexican eagle; "I never did see the time when I couldn't match you, anyway. So now, old socks, you can keep right on being a Texan and hating Mexicans like horny toads, and I'll denounce the Eagle Tail the minute the time is up. And I won't go near the Aragon outfit unless you're with me—is that a go? All right, shake hands on it, pard! I wouldn't quarrel with you for anything!"

"Aw, that's all right," mumbled Bud, rising and holding out his hand. "I knowed you didn't mean nothing." He sat down again after that and gazed drearily out the door.

"Say, Bud," began Phil, his eyes sparkling with amusement, "I've got something to tell you about that dance last night. If I didn't put the crusher on Mr. Feliz Luna and Manuel del Rey! Wow! I sure wished you were there to see me do it."

"This Feliz Luna is the son of an old sugar-planter down in the hot country somewhere. He got run out by the *re-*

voltosos and now he's up here trying to make a winning with Gracia Aragon—uniting two noble families, and all that junk. Well, sir, of all the conceited, swelled-up little squirts you ever saw in your life he's the limit, and yet the old man kind of favors him.

"But this Manuel del Rey is the captain of the *rurales* around here and a genuine Mexican fire-eater—all buckskin and fierce *mustachios*, and smells like chili peppers and garlic—and the two of 'em were having it back and forth as to who got the next dance with Gracia.

"Well, you know how it is at a Mexican dance—everybody is supposed to be introduced to everybody else—and when I saw those two young turkey-cocks talking with their hands and eyebrows and everybody else backing off, I stepped in close and looked at the girl.

"And she's some girl, too, believe me! The biggest brown eyes you ever saw in your life, a complexion like cream, and hair—well, there never was such hair! She was fanning herself real slow, and in the language of the fan that means: 'This don't interest me a bit!' So, just to show her I was wise, I pulled out my handkerchief and dropped it on the floor, and when she saw me she stopped and began to count the ribs in her fan. That was my cue—it meant she wanted to speak with me—so I stepped up and said:

"Excuse me, *señorita*, but while the gentlemen talk—and if the *señora*, your mother, will permit—perhaps we can enjoy a dance?"

"And say, Bud, you should have seen the way she rose to it. That girl is a sport, believe me, and the idea of those two *novios* chewing the rag while she sat out the dance didn't appeal to her at all. So she gave me her hand and away we went, with all the old ladies talking behind their fans and Manuel del Rey blowing up like a volcano in a bunch of *carambas* or worse. Gee, it was great, and she could dance like a queen.

"But here's the interesting part of it—what do you think she asked me, after we'd had our little laugh? Well, you don't need to get so grouchy about it—she asked about *you*!"

"Aw!"

"Yes, she did! So you see what you get for throwing her down!"

"What did she ask?"

"Well, she asked"—here he stopped and laughed—"she asked if you were a cowboy!"

"No!" cried Bud, pleased in spite of himself; "what does she know about cowboys?"

"Oh, she's wise!" declared Phil; "she's been to school twice in Los Angeles and seen the wild west show. Yes, sir, she's just like an American girl and speaks English perfectly. She told me she didn't like the Mexican men—they were too stuck on themselves—and say, Bud, when I told her you were a genuine Texas cowboy, what do you think she said?"

"W'y, I don't know," answered Bud, smiling broadly in anticipation; "what did she say?"

"She said she'd like to know you!"

"She did not!" came back Bud with sudden spirit.

Though he laughed the thought away, a great burden seemed to be lifted from his heart, and he found himself happy again.

X

To an American, accustomed to getting things done first and talking about it afterward, there is nothing so subtly irritating as the old-world formalism, the polite evasiveness of the Mexicans; and yet, at times, they can speak to the point with the best of us.

For sixty days Don Cipriano Aragon had smiled and smiled and then, suddenly, as the last day of their mining permit passed by and there was no record of a denouncement by Cruz Mendez, he appeared at the Eagle Tail mine with a pistol in his belt and a triumphant sneer on his lips.

Behind him rode four Mexicans, fully armed, and they made no reply to De Lancey's polite "*Buenos días!*"

"Take your poor things," burst out Aragon, pointing contemptuously at their tent and beds, "and your low, *pelado* Mexican—and go! This mine no longer stands in the name of Cruz Mendez, and I want it for myself! No, not a word!" he cried, as De Lancey opened his mouth to explain. "Nothing! Only go!"

"No, *señor*," said Hooker, dropping his hand to his six-shooter which hung low by his leg and stepping forward, "we will not go!"

"What?" stormed Aragon, "you—"

"Be careful there!" warned Bud, sud-

denly fixing his eyes on one of the four retainers. "If you touch that gun I'll kill you!"

There was a pause, in which the Mexicans sat frozen to their saddles, and then De Lancey broke the silence.

"You must not think, Señor Aragon," he began, speaking with a certain bitterness, "that you can carry your point like this. My friend here is a Texan, and if your men stir he will kill them. But there is a law in this country for every man—what is it that you want?"

"I want this mining claim," shouted Aragon, "that you have so unjustly taken from me through that scoundrel Mendez! And I want you to step aside, so that I can set up my monuments and take possession of it."

"The Señor Aragon has not been to the *agente mineral* to-day," suggested De Lancey suavely. "If he had taken the trouble he would not—"

"Enough!" cried Aragon, still trying to carry it off cavalierly; "I sent my servant to the mining agent yesterday and he reported that the permit had lapsed."

"If he had taken the pains to inquire for new permits, however," returned De Lancey, "he would have found that one has been issued to me. I am now a Mexican citizen, like yourself."

"You!" screamed Aragon, his eyes bulging with astonishment; and then, finding himself tricked, he turned suddenly upon one of his retainers and struck him with his whip.

"Son of a goat!" he stormed. "Pig! Is this the way you obey my orders?"

But though he raved and scolded, he had gone too far, and there was no putting the blame on his servant. In his desire to humiliate the hated gringos he had thrown down all his guards, and even De Lancey saw all too clearly what his intentions in the matter had been.

"Spare your cursing, Señor Aragon," he said, "and after this," he added, "you can save your pretty words, too—for somebody else. We shall remain here and hold our property."

"Ha! You *Americanos!*" exclaimed Aragon, as he chewed bitterly on his defeat. "You will rob us of everything—even our government. So you are a Mexican citizen, eh? You must value this barren mine very highly to give up the protection of your government. But per-

haps you are acquainted with a man named Kruger?" he sneered.

"He would sell his honor any time to defraud a Mexican of his rights, and I doubt not it was he who sent you here. Yes, I have known it from the first—but I will fool him yet!

"So you are a Mexican citizen, Señor De Lancey? *Bien*, then you shall pay the full price of your citizenship. Before our law you are now no more than that poor *pelado*, Mendez. You cannot appeal now to your consul at Gadsden—you are only a Mexican! Very well!"

He shrugged his shoulders and smiled significantly.

"No," retorted De Lancey angrily; "you are right—I cannot appeal to my government! But let me tell you something, Señor Mexicano! An American needs no government to protect him—he has his gun, and that is enough!"

"Yes," added Bud, who had caught the drift of the last, "and he has his friends, too; don't forget that!" He strode over toward Aragon and menaced him with a threatening finger.

"If anything happens to my friend," he hissed, "you will have *me* to whip! And now, *señor*," he added, speaking in the idiom of the country, "go with God—and do not come back!"

"Pah!" spat back Aragon, his hate for the pushing foreigner showing in every glance; "I will beat you yet! And I pray God the *revoltosos* come this way, if they take the full half of my cattle—so long as they get you two!"

"Very well," nodded Bud as Aragon and his men turned away, "but be careful you do not send any!"

"Good!" he continued, smiling grimly at the pallid Phil; "now we got him where we want him—out in the open. And I'll just remember them four *paisanos* he had with him—they're his handy men, the boys with nerve—and don't never let one of 'em catch you out after dark."

De Lancey sat down on a rock and wiped his face.

"Heavens, Bud," he groaned, "I never would have believed it of him—I thought he was on the square. But it just goes to prove the old saying—every Mexican has got a streak of yellow in him somewhere. All you've got to do is to trust him long enough and you'll find it out. Well, we're hep to Mr. Aragon, all right!"

"I never seen one of these polite, palavering Mexicans yet," observed Bud sagely, "that wasn't crooked. And this feller Aragon is mean, to boot. But that's a game," he added, "that two can play at. I don't know how you feel, Phil, but we been kinder creeping and slipping around so long that I'm all cramped up inside. Never suffered more in my life than the last sixty days—being polite to that damn Mexican. Now it's our turn. Are you game?"

"Count me in!" cried De Lancey, rising from his rock. "What's the play?"

"Well, we'll go into town pretty soon," grinned Bud, "and if I run across old Aragon, or any one of them four bad Mexicans, I'm going to make a show. And as for that big brindle dog of his—well, he's sure going to get roped and drugged if he don't mend his ways. Come on, let's ketch up our horses and go in for a little time!"

"I'll go you!" agreed Phil with enthusiasm, and half an hour later, each on his favorite horse, they were clattering down the cañon. At the turn of the trail, where it swung into the Aragon lane, Bud took down his rope and smiled in anticipation.

"You go on ahead," he said, shaking out his loop, "and I'll try to put the catgut on Brindle."

"Off like a flash!" answered De Lancey, and, putting the spurs to his fiery bay, he went dashing down the street, scattering chickens and hogs in all directions. Behind came Bud, rolling jovially in his saddle, and as the dogs rushed out after his pardner he twirled his loop once and laid it skilfully across the big brindle's back. But roping dogs is a difficult task at best, and Bud was out of practise. The sudden blow struck Brindle to the ground and the loop came away unfilled. The Texan laughed, shifting in his saddle.

"Come again!" commented Bud, leaning sidewise as he coiled his rope, and as the womenfolk and idlers came rushing to see what had happened he turned Copper Bottom in his tracks and came back like a streak of light.

"Look out, you ugly man's dog!" he shouted, whirling his rope as he rode; and then, amid a chorus of indignant protests, he chased the yelping Brindle down the lane and through a hole in the fence. Then, with no harm done, he rode back up

the street, smiling amiably and looking for more dogs to rope.

In the door of the store stood Aragon, pale with fury, but Bud appeared not to see him. His eyes were turned rather toward the house where, on the edge of the veranda, Gracia Aragon and her mother stood staring at his antics.

"Good morning to you, ladies!" he saluted, taking off his sombrero with a flourish; "lovely weather, ain't it?" And with his tongue in his cheek and a roguish glance at Aragon, who was struck dumb by this last effrontery, he went rollicking after his pardner, sending back a series of joyous yips.

"Now that sure does me good," he confided to Phil, as they rode down between cottonwoods and struck into the muddy creek. "No sense in it, but it gets something out of my system that has kept me from feeling glad. Did you see me bowing to the ladies? Some class to that bow—no? You want to look out—I got my eye on that gal, and I'm sure a hard one to head. Only thing is, I wouldn't like the old man for a father-in-law the way matters stand between us now."

He laughed boisterously at this witicism, and the little Mexican children, playing among the willows, crouched and lay quiet like rabbits. Along the sides of the rocky hills, where the peons had their mud-and-rock houses, mothers came anxiously to open doors; and as they jogged along up the river the Chinese gardeners, working in each separate nook and eddy of the storm-washed creek-bed, stopped grubbing to gaze at them inquiringly.

"Wonder what's the matter with them chinks?" observed Bud, when his happiness had ceased to effervesce; "they sit up like a village of prairie-dogs! Whole country seems to be on the rubber-neck. Must be something doing."

"That's right," agreed Phil; "did you notice how those peons scattered when I rode down the street? Maybe there's been some *insurrectos* through. But say—listen!"

He stopped his horse, and in the silence a bugle-call came down the wind from the direction of Fortuna.

"Soldiers!" he said. "Now where did they come from? I was in Fortuna day before yesterday, and—well, look at that!"

From the point of the hill just ahead of them a line of soldiers came into view,

marching two abreast, with a mounted officer in the lead.

"Aha!" exclaimed Bud with conviction; "they've started something down below. This is that bunch of Federals that we saw drilling up at Agua Negra."

"Yep," admitted De Lancey regretfully; "I guess you're right for once—the open season for rebels has begun."

They drew out of the road and let them pass—a long, double line of shabby infantrymen, still wearing their last-year's straw hats and summer uniforms and trudging along in flapping sandals.

In front were two men bearing lanterns, to search out the way by night; slatternly women, the inevitable camp-followers, trotted along at the sides with their bundles and babies; and as the little brown men from Zacatecas, each burdened with his heavy gun and a job lot of belts and packs, shuffled patiently past the Americans, they flashed the whites of their eyes and rumbled a chorus of "*Adios!*"

"*Adios, Americanos!*" they called, gazing enviously at their fine horses, and Phil in his turn touched his hat and wished them all God-speed.

"Poor devils!" he murmured, as the last tottering camp-followers, laden with their burdens, brought up the rear and a white-skinned Spanish officer saluted from his horse; "what do those little *pelónes* know about liberty and justice, or the game that is being played? Wearing the same uniforms that they had when they fought for Díaz, and now they are fighting for Madero. Next year they may be working for Orozco or Huerta or Salazar."

"Sure," muttered Bud; "but that ain't the question. If they's rebels in the hills, where do *we* get off?"

XI

THE plaza at Fortuna, ordinarily so peaceful and sleepy, was alive with hurrying men when Bud and Phil reached town. Over at the station a special engine was wheezing and blowing after its heavy run and, from the train of commandeered ore-cars behind, a swarm of soldiers were leaping to the ground. On the porch of the hotel Don Juan de Dios Brachamonte was making violent signals with his hands, and as they rode up he hurried out to meet them.

"My gracious, boys," he cried, "it's a good thing you came into town! Bernardo

Bravo has come over the mountains and he's marching to take Moctezuma!"

"Why, that doesn't make any difference to us!" answered Phil. "Moctezuma is eighty miles from here—and look at all the soldiers. How many men has Bernardo got?"

"Well, that I do not know," responded Don Juan; "some say more and some less, but if you boys hadn't come in I would have sent a man to fetch you. Just as soon as a revolution begins the back country becomes unsafe for Americans. Some of these low characters are likely to murder you if they think you have any money."

"Well, we haven't," put in Bud; "but we've got a mine—and we're going to keep it, too."

"Aw, Bernardo Bravo hasn't got any men!" scoffed Phil; "I bet this is a false alarm. He got whipped out of his boots over in Chihuahua last fall, and he's been up in the Sierra Madres ever since. Probably come down to steal a little beef."

"Why, Don Juan, Bud and I lived right next to a trail all last year and if we'd listened to one-tenth of the *revoltoso* stories we heard we wouldn't have taken out an ounce of gold. I'm going to get my denouncement papers to-morrow, and I'll bet you we work that mine all summer and never know the difference. These rebels won't hurt you any, anyhow!"

"No! Only beg a little grub!" added Bud scornfully. "Come on, Phil; let's go over and look at the soldiers—it's that bunch of Yaquis we saw up at Agua Negra."

They tied their horses to the rack and, leaving the solicitous Don Juan to sputter, hurried over to the yard. From the heavy metal ore-cars, each a rolling fortress in itself, the last of the active Yaquis were helping out their women and pet dogs, while the rest, talking and laughing in high spirits, were strung out along the track in a perfunctory line.

If the few officers in command had ever attempted to teach them military discipline, the result was not apparent in the line they formed; but any man who looked at their swarthy faces, the hawklike profiles, and deep-set, steady eyes, would know that they were fighters.

After all, a straight line on parade has very little to do with actual warfare, and these men had proved their worth under fire.

To be sure, it was the fire of Mexican guns, and perhaps that was why the officers were so quiet and unassertive; for every one of these big, upstanding Indians had been captured in the Yaqui wars and deported to the henequen fields of Yucatan to die in the miasma and heat.

But they had come from a hardy breed and the whirligig of fortune was flying fast—Madero defeated Porfirio Diaz; fresh revolutions broke out against the victor and, looking about in desperation for soldiers to fill his ranks, Madero fell upon the Yaquis.

Trained warriors for generations, of a race so fierce that the ancient Aztecs had been turned aside by them in their empire-founding migration, they were the very men to whip back the rebels, if he could but win them to his side.

So Madero had approached Chief Bule, whom Diaz had taken under a flag of truce, and soon the agreement was made. In return for faithful service, Mexico would give back to the Indians the one thing they had been fighting a hundred and sixty years to attain, their land along the Rio Yaqui; and there they should be permitted to live in peace as their ancestors had done before them.

And so, with a thousand or more of his men, the crafty old war-chief had taken service in the Federal army, though his mind, poisoned perhaps by the treachery he had suffered, was not entirely free from guile.

"It is the desire of the Yaquis," he had said, when rebuked for serving under the hated flag of Mexico, "to kill Mexicans. And," he added grimly, "the Federals at this time seem best able to give us guns for that purpose."

But it had been a year now since Bule had passed his word and, though they had battled valiantly, their land had not been given back to them. The wild Yaquis, the irreconcilables who never came down from the hills, had gone on the war-path again, but Bule and his men still served.

Only in two things did they disobey their officers—they would not stack their arms, and they would not retreat while there were still more Mexicans to be killed. Otherwise they were very good soldiers.

But now, after the long campaign in Chihuahua and a winter of idleness at Agua Negra, they were marching south toward their native land and, in spite of the

stern glances of their leaders, they burst forth in weird Yaqui songs which, if their words had been known, might easily have caused their Mexican officers some slight uneasiness.

It was, in fact, only a question of days, months, or years until the entire Yaqui contingent would desert, taking their arms and ammunition with them.

"Gee, what a bunch of men!" exclaimed Bud, as he stood off and admired their stark forms.

"There's some genuine fighters for you," he observed to Phil; and a giant Yaqui, standing near, returned his praise with a smile.

"W'y, hello there, Amigo!" hailed Bud, jerking his head in a friendly salute. "That's a feller I was making signs to up in Agua Negra," he explained. "Dogged if I ain't stuck on these Yaquis—they're all men, believe me!"

"Good workers, all right," conceded De Lancey, "but I'd hate to have 'em get after me with those guns. They say they've killed a lot of Americans, one time and another."

"Well, if they did it was for being caught in bad company," said Hooker. "I'd take a chance with 'em any time—but if you go into their country with a Mexican escort they'll kill you on general principles. Say," he cried impulsively, "I'm going over to talk with Amigo!"

With a broad grin on his honest face he advanced toward the giant Yaqui and shook hands ceremoniously.

"Where you go?" he inquired in Spanish, at the same time rolling a cigarette and asking by a sign for a match.

"Moctezuma," answered the Indian gravely. Then, as Bud offered him the makings, he, too, rolled a cigarette and they smoked for a minute in silence.

"You live here?" inquired the Yaqui at last.

"Come here," corrected Bud. "I have mine—ten miles—over there."

He pointed with the flat of his hand, Indian fashion, and Amigo nodded understandingly.

He was a fine figure of a man, standing six feet or better in his well-cut sandals and handling his heavy Mauser as a child would swing a stick. Across his broad chest he wore a full cartridge-belt, and around his waist he had two more, filled to the last hole with cartridges and loaded

clips. At his feet lay his blanket, bound into a tight roll, and a canteen and coffee-cup completed his outfit, which, so far as impedimenta were concerned, was simplicity itself.

But instead of the cheap linen uniform of the Federals he was dressed in good American clothes—a striped shirt, overalls, and a sombrero banded with a bright ribbon—and in place of the beaten, hunted look of those poor conscripts he had the steady gaze of a free man.

They stood and smoked for a few moments, talking briefly, and then, as the Yaquis closed up their ranks and marched off to make camp for the night, Bud presented his strange friend with the sack of tobacco and went back to join his pardner.

That evening the plaza was filled with the wildest rumors, and another train arrived during the night, but through it all Bud and Phil remained unimpressed. In the morning the soldiers went marching off down the trail, leaving a great silence where all had been bugle-calls and excitement, and then the first fugitive came in from down below.

He was an old Mexican, with trembling beard and staring eyes, and he told a tale of outrage that made their blood run cold. The red-flags had come to his house at night; they had killed his wife and son, left him upon the ground for dead, and carried off his daughter, a prisoner.

But later, when the *comisario* questioned him sharply, it developed that he lived not far away, had no daughter to lose, and was, in fact, only a crazed old man who told for truth that which he feared would happen.

Notwithstanding the dénouement, his story stirred the Mexican population to the depths, and when Bud and Phil tried to hire men to push the work on the mine, they realized that their troubles had begun. Not only was it impossible to engage laborers at any price, but on the following day Cruz Mendez, with his wife and children and all his earthly possessions on his burros, came hurrying in from the camp and told them he could serve them no more.

"It is my woman!" he explained; "my Maria! Ah, if those *revoltosos* should see Maria they would steal her before my eyes!"

So he was given his pay and the fifty dollars he had earned and, after the cus-

tomary "*Muchas gracias*," and with the faithful Maria by his side, he went hurrying off to the store.

And now in crowded vehicles; with armed men riding in front and behind, the refugees from Moctezuma and the hot country began to pour into town, adding by their very haste to the panic of all who saw them.

They were the rich property-owners who, having been subjected to forced contribution before, were now fleeing at the first rumor of danger, bringing their families with them to escape any being held for ransom.

In half a day the big hotel presided over by Don Juan de Dios Brachamonte was swarming with staring-eyed country mothers and sternly subdued families of children; and finally, to add *éclat* to the occasion and compensate for the general confusion, Don Cipriano Aragon y Tres Palacios came driving up to the door with his wife and the smiling Gracia.

If she had been in any fear of capture by bold marauders, Gracia Aragon did not show it now, as she sprang lightly from the carriage and waited upon her lady mother. Perhaps, after a year or more of rumors and alarms, she had come to look upon impending revolutionary conflicts as convenient excuses for a trip to town, a long stop at the hotel, and even a dash to gay Gadsden in case the rebels pressed close.

However that may be, while Don Juan exerted himself to procure them a good room she endured the gaze of the American guests with becoming placidity and, as that took some time, she even ventured to look the Americans over and make some comments to her mother.

And then—or so it seemed to Bud—the mother glanced up quickly and fixed her eyes upon him. After that he was in less of a hurry to return to the mine, and Phil said they would stay inside for a week. But as for Don Cipriano, when he came across them in the crowded lobby he glared past them with malignant insolence and abruptly turned his back.

At La Fortuna he was the lord and master, with power to forbid them the place; but now once more the fortunes of war had turned against him, and he was forced to tolerate their presence.

The band played in the plaza that evening, it being Thursday of the week, and

as the cornet led with "*La Paloma*," and the bass viol and guitars beat the measure, all feet seemed to turn in that direction, and the fear of the raiders was stilled.

Around and around the band-stand and in and out beneath the trees the pleasure-loving maidens from down below walked decorously with their mothers; and the little band of Fortuna Americans, to whom life for some months had been a trifle burdensome, awoke suddenly to the beauty of the evening.

And among the rest of the maidens, but far more ravishing and high-bred, walked Gracia Aragon, at whom Bud in particular stole many secret glances from beneath the broad brim of his hat, hoping that by some luck the *insurrectos* would come upon the town, and he could defend her—he alone. For he felt that he could do it against any hundred Mexicans that ever breathed.

XII

IN its inception the Fortuna hotel had not been intended for the use of Mexicans—in fact, its rates were practically prohibitive for any one not being paid in gold—but, since most of the Americans had left, and seven dollars a day Mex was no deterrent to the rich refugee landowners, it became of a sudden international, with a fine mixture of purse-provid Spaniards and race-proud American adventurers.

Not a very pleasing combination for the parents of romantic damsels destined for some prearranged marriage of state, but very exciting for the damsels and most provocative to the Americans.

After the promenade in the plaza the mothers by common consent preempted the up-stairs reception-room, gathering their precious charges in close; while the Americans, after their custom, foregathered in the lobby, convenient to the bar. Hot arguments about the revolution, and predictions of events to come, served to pass the early evening, with many scornful glances at the Mexican dandies who went so insolently up the stairs. And then, as the refugees retired to their apartments and the spirit of adventure rose uppermost, Phil De Lancey made a dash out into the darkness and came back with a Mexican string band.

"A serenade, boys!" he announced, as the musicians filed sheepishly into the hotel. "Our guests, the fair *señoritas*, you know! We'll make those young Mexican

dudes look like two-spots before the war is over. Who's game now for a song beneath the windows? You know the old stand-byes — 'La Paloma' and Teresita Mia—and you want to listen to me sing Me Gustan Todas to Gracia, the fairest of the fair! Come on, fellows, out in the plaza, and then listen to the old folks cuss!"

They adjourned then, after a drink for courage, to the moonlight and the plaza; and there, beneath the shuttered windows and vacant balconies, the guitars and violins took up "La Paloma," while Phil and a few brave spirits sang.

A silence followed their first attempt, as well as their second and third, and the *comisario* of police, a mild creature owned and paid by the company, came around and made a few ineffectual protests.

But inside the company's concession, where by common consent the militant *rurales* kept their hands off, the Americans knew they were safe, and they soon jollied the *comisario* into taking a drink and departing. Then De Lancey took up the burden, and the string band, hired by the hour, strummed on as if for eternity.

One by one the windows opened; fretful fathers stepped out on the balcony and, bound by the custom and convention of the country, thanked them and bade them good night. But the two windows behind which the Señor Aragon and his family reposed did not open and, though the dwindling band stood directly under their balcony, and all knew that his daughter was the fairest of the fair, Don Cipriano did not wish them good night.

Perhaps he recognized the leading tenor—and the big voice of Bud Hooker, trying to still the riot—but, however it was, he would not speak to them, and De Lancey would not quit.

"Try 'em on American music!" he cried, as every one but Bud went away in disgust, "the latest rag from Broadwa-ay, New York. Here, gimme that guitar, *hombre*, and listen to this now!"

He picked out a clever bit of syncopation and pitched his voice to a heady twang:

"Down in the garden where the red roses grow,

Oh my, I long to go!

Pluck me like a flower, cuddle me an hour,
Lovie let me learn the Red Rose Ra-ag!"

There was some swing to that, and it seemed to make an impression, for just as

he was well started on the chorus the slats of one of the shutters parted and a patch of white shone through the spaces. It was the ladies, then, who were getting interested! Phil wailed on:

"Swee-et honey-bee, be sweet to me!
My heart is free, but here's the key!"

And then, positively, he could see that patch of white beat time. He took heart of grace at that and sang on to the end, and at a suggestion of clapping in dumb-show he gave an encore and ragged it over again.

"'Ev'rybody's doin' it, doin' it, doin' it!" he began, as the shadow dance ceased.

"'Honey, I declare, it's a bear, it's a bear, it's a bear!'" he continued temptingly, and was well on his way to further extravagancies when the figure in white swiftly vanished and a door slammed hard inside the house.

Several minutes later the form of Don Juan appeared at the lower door, and in no uncertain tones he requested them to cease.

"The Señor Aragon informs me," he said, "that your music annoys him."

"Well, let him come to the balcony and say his '*buenas noches*,'" answered Phil resentfully.

"The gentleman refuses to do that!" responded Don Juan briefly.

"Then let him go to bed!" replied De Lancey, strumming a few syncopated chords; "I'm singing to his daughter."

At that Don Juan came down off the porch in his slippers and they engaged in a protracted argument.

"What, don't I get a word?" demanded Phil grievously, "not a pleasant look from anybody? 'Swee-et honey-bee, be sweet to me!'" he pleaded, turning pathetically to the lady's balcony; and then, with a sudden flourish, a white handkerchief appeared through the crack of the shutters and Gracia waved him good night.

"Enough, Don Juan!" he cried, laying down the guitar with a thump; "this ends our evening's entertainment!"

After paying and thanking the stolid musicians Phil joined Bud and the pair adjourned to their room where, in the intervals of undressing, Phil favored the occupants of the adjoining apartments with an aria from "Beautiful Doll."

But for all such nights of romance and music there is always a morning afterward;

and a fine tenor voice set to rag-time never helped much in the development of a mine. Though Bud had remained loyally by his friend in his evening serenade he, for one, never forgot for a moment that they were in Fortuna to work the Eagle Tail and not to win the hearts of Spanish-Mexican *señoritas*, no matter how attractive they might be.

Bud was a practical man who, if he ever made love, would doubtless do it in a perfectly businesslike way, without hiring any string bands. But at the same time he was willing to make some concessions.

"Well, go ahead and get your sleep, then," he growled, after trying three times in the morning to get his pardner up; "I'm going out to the mine!"

Then, with a saddle-gun under his knee and his six-shooter hung at his hip, he rode rapidly down the road, turning out from time to time to let long cavalcades of mules string by. The dead-eyed *arrieros*, each with his combined mule-blind and whip-lash swinging free, seemed to have very little on their minds but their pack-lashings, and yet they must be three days out from Moctezuma.

Their mules, too, were well loaded with the products of the hot country—*fanegas* of corn in red leather sacks, oranges and fruits in hand-made crates, *panoches* of sugar in balanced frames, long joints of sugar-cane for the *dulce* pedlars, and nothing to indicate either haste or flight.

Three times he let long pack-trains go by without a word, and then at last, overcome by curiosity, he inquired about the *revoltosos*.

"What *revoltosos*?" queried the old man to whom he spoke.

"Why, the men of Bernardo Bravo," answered Bud; "the men who are marching to take Moctezuma."

"When I left Moctezuma," returned the old man politely, "all was quiet—there were no *revoltosos*. Since then, I cannot say."

"But the soldiers!" cried Bud. "Surely you saw them! They were marching to fight the rebels."

"Perhaps so," shrugged the *arriero*, laying the lash of his *topojo* across the rump of a mule; "but I know nothing about it."

"No," muttered Bud, as he continued on his way; "and I'll bet nobody else does."

Inquiry showed that in this, too, he was

correct. From those who traveled fast and from those who traveled slow he received the same wondering answer—the country might be filled with *revoltosos*; but as for them, they knew nothing about it.

Not until he got back to Fortuna and the busy Federals telegraph-wire did he hear any more news of rapine and bloodshed, and the light which dawned upon him then was gradually dawning upon the whole town.

It was a false alarm, given out for purposes of state and the "higher politics" with which Mexico is cursed, and the most that was ever seen of Bernardo Bravo and his lawless men was twenty miserable creatures, half-starved, but with guns in their hands, who had come down out of the mountains east of Moctezuma and killed a few cows for beef.

Thoroughly disgusted, and yet vaguely alarmed at this bit of opera-bouffe warfare, Bud set himself resolutely to work to hunt up men for their mine, and, as many poor people were out of employment because of the general stagnation of business, he soon had ten Mexicans at his call.

Then, as Phil had dropped out of sight, he ordered supplies at the store and engaged Cruz Mendez—who had spent his fortune in three days—to pack the goods out on his mules.

They were ready to start the next morning if De Lancey could be found to order the powder and tools, and as the afternoon wore on and no Phil appeared, Bud went on a long hunt which finally discovered him in the balcony of their window, making signs in the language of the bear.*

"Say, Phil," he hailed, disregarding his pardner's obvious preoccupation; "break away for a minute and tell me what kind of powder to get to break that schist—the store closes at five o'clock, and—"

He thrust his head out the door as he spoke and paused, abashed. Through the half-closed portal of the next balcony but one he beheld the golden hair of Gracia Aragon, and she fixed her brown eyes upon him with a dazzling, mischievous smile.

"O-ho!" murmured Bud, laying a compelling hand on De Lancey and backing swiftly out of range; "so this is what you're up to—talking signs! But say, Phil," he continued, beckoning him peremptorily with a jerk of his head, "I got

* In Mexico a man who flirts with a woman, or courts her surreptitiously through the bars of her window, is called a "bear."

ten men hired and a lot of grub bought, and if you don't pick out that mining stuff we're going to lose a day. So get the lady to excuse you and come on now."

"In a minute," pleaded Phil, and he went at the end of his allotted time, and perhaps it was the imp of jealousy that put strength into Hooker's arm.

"Well, that's all right," said Bud, as Phil began his laughing excuses; "but you want to remember the Maine, pardner—we didn't come down here to play the bear. When they's any love-making to be done I want to be in on it. And you want to remember that promise you made me—you said you wouldn't have a thing to do with the Aragon outfit unless I was with you!"

"Why, you aren't—you aren't jealous, are you, Bud?"

"Yes, I'm jealous!" answered Hooker harshly; "jealous as the devil! And I want you to keep that promise, see?"

"Aw, Bud—" began De Lancey incredulously; but Hooker silenced him with a look. Perhaps he was really jealous, or perhaps he only said so to have his way, but Phil saw that he was in earnest, and he went quietly by his side.

But love had set his brain in a whirl, and he thought no more of his promise—only of some subtler way of meeting his innamorata, some way which Bud would fail to see.

XIII

FOR sixty days and more, while the weather had been turning from cold to warm and they had been laboring feebly to clear away the great slide of loose rock that covered up the ledge, the Eagle Tail mine had remained a mystery.

Whether, like the old Eagle Tail of frontier fable, it was so rich that only the eagle's head was needed to turn the chunks into twenty-dollar gold pieces; or whether, like many other frontier mines, it was nothing but a hole in the ground, was a matter still to be settled. And Bud, for one, was determined to settle it quickly.

"Come on," he said, as Phil hesitated to open up the way to the lead; "we got a month, maybe less, to get to the bottom of this; and then the hills will be lousy with rebels. If they's nothing here, we want to find out about it quick and skip—and if we strike it, by grab, they ain't enough red-flaggers in Sonora to prize me loose from it. So show these *hombres* where to

work and we'll be up against rock by the end of the week."

The original Eagle Tail tunnel had been driven into the side of a steep hill; so steep, in fact, that the loose shale stretched in long shoots from the base of the frowning porphyry dikes that crowned the tops of the hills to the bottom of the cañon. On either side of the discovery gulch sharp ridges, perforated by the gopher-holes of the Mexicans and the ancient workings of the Spaniards, ran directly up the hill to meet the contact. But it was against the face of the big ridge itself that Kruger had driven his drift and exploded his giant blast of dynamite, and the whole slope had been altered and covered with a slide of rock.

Against this slide, in the days when they were marking time, Bud and his pardner had directed their energies, throwing the loose stones aside, building up walls against the slip, and clearing the way to the solid schist. There, somewhere beneath the jumble of powder-riven rock, lay the ledge which, if they found it, would make them rich; and now, with single-jack and drill, they attacked the last huge fragments, blasting them into pieces and groveling deeper until they could strike the contact, where the schist and porphyry met and the gold spray had spewed up between.

It was slow work; slower than they had thought, and the gang of Mexicans that they had hired for muckers were marvels of ineptitude. Left to themselves, they accomplished nothing, since each problem they encountered seemed to present to them some element of insuperable difficulty, to solve which they either went into caucus or waited for the boss. Meanwhile they kept themselves awake by smoking cigarettes and telling stories about Bernardo Bravo.

To the Mexicans of Sonora Bernardo Bravo was the personification of all the malevolent qualities—he being a bandit chief who had turned first general and then rebel under Madero—and the fact that he had at last been driven out of Chihuahua and therefore over into Sonora, made his malevolence all the more imminent.

Undoubtedly, somewhere over to the east, where the Sierras towered like a blue wall, Bernardo and his outlaw followers were gathering for a raid, and the raid would bring death to Sonora.

He was a bad man, this Bernardo Bravo, and if half of the current stories were true,

he killed men whenever they failed to give him money, and was never too hurried to take a fair daughter of the country up behind him, provided she took his fancy.

Yes, surely he was a bad man—but that did not clear away the rock.

For the first week Phil took charge of the gang, urging, directing, and cajoling them, and the work went merrily on, though rather slowly. The Mexicans liked to work for Don Felipe, he was so polite and spoke such good Spanish; but at the end of the week it developed that Bud could get more results out of them.

Every time Phil started to explain anything to one Mexican all the others stopped to listen to him, and that took time. But Bud's favorite way of directing a man was by grunts and signs and bending his own back to the task. Also, he refused to understand Spanish, and cut off all long-winded explanations and suggestions by an impatient motion to go to work, which the *trabajadores* obeyed with shrugs and grins.

So Don Felipe turned powder-man and blacksmith, sharpening up the drills at the little forge they had fashioned and loading the holes with dynamite when it became necessary to break a rock, while Bud bossed the unwilling Mexicans.

In an old tunnel behind their tent they set a heavy gate, and behind it they stored their precious powder. Then came the portable forge and the blacksmith-shop, just inside the mouth of the cave, and the tent backed up against it for protection. For if there is any one thing, next to horses, that the rebels are wont to steal, it is giant powder to blow up culverts with, or to lay on the counters of timorous country merchants and frighten them into making contributions.

As for their horses, Bud kept them belled and hobbled, close to the house, and no one ever saw him without his gun. In the morning, when he got up, he took it from under his pillow and hung it on his belt, and there it stayed until bedtime.

He also kept a sharp watch on the trail, above and below, and what few men did pass through were conscious of his eye. Therefore it was all the more surprising when, one day, looking up suddenly from heaving at a great rock, he saw the big Yaqui soldier, Amigo, gazing down at him from the cut bank.

Yes, it was the same man, yet with a difference—his rifle and cartridge-belts

were absent and his clothes were torn by the brush. But the same good-natured, competent smile was there, and after a few words with Bud he leaped nimbly down the bank and laid hold upon the rock. They pulled together, and the boulder that had balked Bud's gang of Mexicans moved easily for the two of them.

Then Amigo seized a crowbar and slipped it into a cranny and showed them a few things about moving rocks. For half an hour or more he worked along, seemingly bent on displaying his skill, then he sat down on the bank and watched the Mexicans with tolerant, half-amused eyes.

If he was hungry he showed it only by the cigarettes he smoked, and Hooker, studying upon the chances he would take by hiring a deserter, let him wait until he came to a decision.

"*Oyez, Amigo,*" he hailed at last and, rubbing his hand around on his stomach, he smiled questioningly, whereat the Yaqui nodded his head avidly.

"*Starwano!*" said Hooker, "*ven.*" And he left his Mexicans to dawdle as they would while he led the Indian to camp. There he showed him the coffee-pot and the kettle of beans by the fire, set out a slab of Dutch-oven bread and a sack of jerked beef, some stewed fruit and a can of sirup, and left him to do his worst.

In the course of half an hour or so he came back and found the Yaqui sopping up sirup with the last of the bread and humming a little tune. So they sat down and smoked a cigarette and came to the business at hand.

"Where you go?" inquired Bud; but Amigo only shrugged enigmatically.

"You like to work?" continued Bud, and the Indian broke into a smile of assent.

"*Muy bien,*" said Hooker with finality; "I give Mexicans two dollars a day—I give you four. Is that enough?"

"*Si,*" nodded the Yaqui, and without more words he followed Bud back to the cut. There, in half a day, he accomplished more than all the Mexicans put together, leaping boldly up the bank to dislodge hanging boulders, boosting them by main strength up onto the ramshackle tram they had constructed, and trundling them out to the dump with the shove of a mighty hand.

He was a willing worker, using his head every minute; but though he was such a hustler and made their puny efforts seem

so ineffectual by comparison, he managed in some mysterious way to gain the immediate approval of the Mexicans. Perhaps it was his all-pervasive good nature, or the respect inspired by his hardihood; perhaps the qualities of natural leadership which had made him a picked man among his brother Yaquis. But when, late in the afternoon, Bud came back from a trip to the tent he found Amigo in charge of the gang, heaving and struggling and making motions with his head.

"Good enough!" he muttered, after watching him for a minute in silence, and leaving the new boss in command, he went back and started supper.

That was the beginning of a new day at the Eagle Tail, and when De Lancey came back from town—whither he went whenever he could conjure up an errand—he found that, for once, he had not been missed.

Bud was doing the blacksmithing, Amigo was directing the gang, and a fresh mess of beans was on the fire, the first kettleful having gone to reenforce the Yaqui's backbone. But they were beans well spent, and Bud did not regret the raid on his grub-pile. If he could get half as much work for what he fed the Mexicans he could well rest content.

"But how did this Indian happen to find you?" demanded Phil, when his pardner had explained his acquisition. "Say, he must have deserted from his company when they brought them back from Motezuma!"

"More'n likely," assented Bud. "He ain't talking much, but I notice he keeps his eye out—they'd shoot him for a deserter if they could ketch him. I'd hate to see him go that way."

"Well, if he's as good as this, let's take care of him!" cried Phil with enthusiasm. "I'll tell you, Bud, there's something big coming off pretty soon and I'd like to stay around town a little more if I could. I want to keep track of things."

"F'r instance?" suggested Hooker dryly. It had struck him that Phil was spending a good deal of time in town already.

"Well, there's this revolution. Sure as shooting they're going to pull one soon. There's two thousand Mexican miners working at Fortuna, and they say every one of 'em has got a rifle buried. Now they're beginning to quit and drift out into

the hills, and we're likely to hear from them any time."

"All the more reason for staying in camp, then," remarked Bud. "I'll tell you, Phil, I need you here. That dogged ledge is lost, good and plenty, and I need you to say where to dig. We ain't doing much better than old Aragon did—just rooting around in that rock-pile—let's do a little timbering, and sink."

"You can't timber that rock," answered De Lancey decidedly. "And besides, it's cheaper to make a cut twenty feet deep than it is to tunnel or sink a shaft. Wait till we get to that porphyry contact—then we'll know where we're at."

"All right," grumbled Bud; "but seems like we're a long time getting there. What's the news down-town?"

"Well, the fireworks have begun again over in Chihuahua—Orozco and Salazar and that bunch—but it seems there was something to this Motezuma scare, after all. I was talking to an American mining man from down that way and he told me that the Federals marched out to where the rebels were and then sat down and watched them cross the river without firing on them—some kind of an understanding between Bernardo Bravo and these blackleg Federals.

"The only fighting there was was when a bunch of twenty Yaquis got away from their officers in the rough country and went after Bernardo Bravo by their lonesome. That threw a big scare into him, too, but he managed to fight them off—and if I was making a guess I'd bet that your Yaqui friend was one of that fighting twenty."

"I reckon," assented Bud; "but don't you say nothing. I need that *hombre* in my business. Come on, let's go up and look at that cut—I come across an old board to-day, down in the muck, and I bet you it's a piece that Kruger left. Funny we don't come across some of his tools, though, or the hole where the powder went off."

"When we do that," observed Phil, "we'll be where we're going. Nothing to do then but lay off the men and wait till I get my papers. That's why I say don't hurry so hard—we haven't got our title to this claim, pardner, and we won't get it, either—not for some time yet. Suppose you'd hit this ledge—"

"Well, if I hit it," remarked Bud, "I'll



HE THREW THEM ABOUT LIKE DOGS THAT HANG ONTO A BEAR

[See page 373]

stay with it—you can trust me for that. Hello, what's the Yaqui found?"

As they came up the cut Amigo quit work and, while the Mexicans followed suit and gathered expectantly behind him, he picked up three rusty drills and an iron drill-spoon and presented them to Bud.

Evidently he had learned the object of their search from the Mexicans, but if he looked for any demonstrations of delight at sight of these much-sought-for tools he was doomed to disappointment, for both Bud and Phil had schooled themselves to keep their faces straight.

"Um-m," said Bud, "old drills, eh? Where you find them?"

The Yaqui led the way to the face of the cut and showed the spot, a hole beneath the pile of riven rock; and a Mexican, not to be outdone, grabbed up a handful of powdered porphyry and indicated where the dynamite had pulverized it.

"*Bien*," said Phil, pawing solemnly around in the bottom of the hole; and then, filling his handkerchief with fine dirt, he carried it down to the creek. There, in a miner's pan, he washed it out carefully, slopping the waste over the edge and swirling the water around until at last only a little dirt was left in the bottom of the pan. Then, while all the Mexicans looked on, he tailed this toward the edge, scanning the last remnant for gold—and quit without a color.

"*Nada!*" he cried, throwing down the pan, and in some way the Mexicans sensed the fact that the mine had turned out a failure. Three times he went back to the cut and scooped up the barren dust, and then he told the men they could quit.

"No more work!" he said, affecting a dejected bitterness; "*no hay nada*—there is nothing!" And with this sad, but by no means unusual, ending to their labors, the Mexicans went away to their camp, speculating among themselves as to whether they could get their pay. But when the last of them had gone Phil beckoned Bud into the tent and showed him a piece of quartz.

"Just take a look at that!" he said, and a single glance told Hooker that it was full of fine particles of gold.

"I picked that up when they weren't looking," whispered De Lancey, his eyes dancing with triumph. "It's the same rock—the same as Kruger's!"

"Well, put 'er there, then, pardner!"

cried Bud, grabbing at De Lancey's hand; "we've struck it!"

And with a broad grin on their deceitful faces they danced silently around the tent, after which they paid off the Mexicans and bade them "*adios!*"

XIV

It is a great sensation—striking it rich—one of the greatest in the world.

Some men punch a burro over the desert all their lives in the hope of achieving it once; Bud and Phil had taken a chance, and the prize lay within their grasp. Only a little while now—a month, maybe, if the officials were slow—and the title would be theirs.

The Mexican miners, blinded by their ignorance, went their way, well contented to get their money. Nobody knew. There was nothing to do but to wait. But to wait, as some people know, is the hardest work in the world.

For the first few days they lingered about the mine, gloating over it in secret, laughing back and forth, singing gay songs—then, as the ecstasy passed and the weariness of waiting set in, they went two ways. Some fascination, unexplained to Bud, drew De Lancey to the town. He left in the morning and came back at night, but Hooker stayed at the mine.

Day and night, week-days and Sundays, he watched it jealously, lest some one should slip in and surprise their secret—and for company he had his pet horse, Copper Bottom, and the Yaqui Indian, Amigo.

Ignacio was the Indian's real name, for the Yaquis are all good Catholics and named uniformly after the saints; but Bud had started to call him Amigo, or friend, and Ignacio had conferred the same name on him.

Poor Ignacio! his four-dollar-a-day job had gone glimmering in half a day, but when the Mexican laborers departed he lingered around the camp, doing odd jobs, until he won a place for himself.

At night he slept up in the rocks, where no treachery could take him unaware, but at the first peep of dawn it was always Amigo who arose and lit the fire.

Then, if no one got up, he cooked a breakfast after his own ideas, boiling the coffee until it was as strong as lye, broiling meat on sticks, and went to turn out the horses.

With the memory of many envious glances cast at Copper Bottom, Hooker had built a stout corral, where he kept the horses up at night, allowing them to graze close-hobbled in the daytime.

A Mexican *insurrecto* on foot is a contradiction of terms, if there are any horses or mules in the country, and several bands of ex-miners from Fortuna had gone through their camp in that condition, with new rifles in their hands. But if they had any designs on the Eagle Tail live stock they speedily gave them up; for, while he would feed them and even listen to their false tales of patriotism, Bud had no respect for numbers when it came to admiring his horse.

Even with the Yaqui, much as he trusted him, he had reservations about Copper Bottom; and once, when he found him petting him and stroking his nose, he shook his head forbiddingly. And from that day on, though he watered Copper Bottom and cared for his wants, Amigo was careful never to caress him.

But in all other matters, even to lending him his gun, Bud trusted the Yaqui absolutely. It was about a week after he came to camp that Amigo sighted a deer, and when Bud loaned him his rifle he killed it with a single shot.

Soon afterward he came loping back from a scouting trip and made signs for the gun again, and this time he brought in a young peccary, which he roasted in a pit, Indian style. After that, when the meat was low, Bud sent him out to hunt, and each time he brought back a wild hog or a deer for every cartridge.

The one cross under which the Yaqui suffered was the apparent failure of the mine and, after slipping up into the cut a few times, he finally came back radiant.

"*Mira!*" he said, holding out a piece of rock; and when Hooker gazed at the chunk of quartz he pointed to the specks of gold and grunted "*Oro!*"

"*Seguro!*" answered Bud, and going down into his pocket, he produced another like it. At this the Yaqui cocked his head to one side and regarded him strangely.

"Why you no dig gold?" he asked at last, and then Bud told him his story.

"We have an enemy," he said, "who might steal it from us. So now we wait for papers. When we get them, we dig!"

"Ah!" breathed Amigo, his face sud-

denly clearing up; "and can I work for you then?"

"*Si,*" answered Bud, "for four dollars a day. But now you help me watch, so nobody comes."

"*Stawano!*" exclaimed the Indian, well satisfied, and after that he spent hours on the hilltop, his black head thrust out over the crest like a chuckawalla lizard as he conned the land below.

So the days went by until three weeks had passed, and still no papers came. As his anxiety increased Phil fell into the habit of staying in town overnight, and finally he was gone for two days. The third day was drawing to a close, and Bud was getting restless, when suddenly he beheld the Yaqui bounding down the hill in great leaps and making signs down the cañon.

"Two men!" he called, dashing up to the tent; "one of them a *rural!*"

"Why a *rural?*" asked Bud, mystified.

"To take me!" cried Amigo, striking himself vehemently on the breast. "Lend me your rifle!"

"No," answered Bud, after a pause; "you might get me into trouble. Run and hide in the rocks—I will signal you when to come back."

"*Muy bien,*" said the Yaqui obediently and, turning, he went up over rocks like a mountain-sheep, bounding from boulder to boulder until he disappeared among the hilltops. Then, as Bud brought in his horse and shut him hastily inside the corral, the two riders came around the point—a *rural* and Aragon!

Now in Mexico a *rural*, as Bud well knew, means trouble—and Aragon meant more trouble, trouble for him. Certainly, so busy a man as Don Cipriano would not come clear to his camp to help capture a Yaqui deserter. Bud sensed it from the start that this was another attempt to get possession of their mine, and he awaited their coming grimly.

"*¡S tardes,*" he said in reply to the *rural's* salute, and then he stood silent before his tent, looking them over shrewdly. The *rural* was a hard-looking citizen, as many of them are, but on this occasion he seemed a trifle embarrassed, glancing inquiringly at Aragon. As for Aragon, he was gazing at a long line of jerked meat which Amigo had hung out to dry, and his drooped eyes opened up suddenly as he turned his cold regard upon Hooker.

"Señor," he said, speaking with an accusing harshness, "we are looking for the men who are stealing my cattle, and I see we have not far to go. Where did you get that meat?"

"I got it from a deer," returned Bud; "there is his hide on the fence; you can see it if you'll look."

The *rural*, glad to create a diversion, rode over and examined the hide and came back satisfied, but Aragon was not so easily appeased.

"By what right," he demanded truculently, "do you, an American, kill deer in our country? Have you the special permit which is required?"

"No, señor," answered Hooker soberly; "the deer was killed by a Mexican I have working for me!"

"Ha!" sneered Aragon, and then he paused, balked.

"Where is this Mexican?" inquired the *rural*, his professional instincts aroused, and while Bud was explaining that he was out in the hills somewhere, Aragon spurred his horse up closer and peered curiously into his tent.

"What are you looking for?" demanded Hooker sharply, and then Aragon showed his hand.

"I am looking for the drills and drill-spoon," he said; "the ones you stole when you took my mine!"

"Then get back out of there!" cried Bud, seizing his horse by the bit and throwing him back on his haunches; "and stay out!" he added, as he dropped his hand to his gun. "But if the *rural* wishes to search," he said, turning to that astounded official, "he is welcome to do so."

"Muchas gracias, no!" returned the *rural*, shaking a finger in front of his face, and then he strode over to where Aragon was muttering and spoke in a low tone.

"No!" dissented Aragon, shaking his head violently; "no—no! I want this man arrested!" he cried, turning vindictively upon Bud. "He has stolen my tools—my mine—my land! He has no business here—no title! This land is mine, and I tell him to go! *Pronto!*" he shouted, menacing Hooker with his riding-whip, but Bud only shifted his feet and stopped listening to his excited Spanish.

"No, señor," he said, when it was all over, "this claim belongs to my pardner, De Lancey. You have no—"

"Ha! De Lancey!" jeered Aragon,

suddenly indulging himself in a sardonic laugh; "De Lancey! Ha, ha!"

"What's the matter?" cried Hooker, as the *rural* joined in with a derisive smirk. "Say, speak up, *hombre!*" he threatened, stepping closer as his eyes took on a dangerous gleam. "And let me tell you now," he added, "that if any man touches a hair of his head I'll kill him like a dog!"

The *rural* backed his horse away, as if suddenly discovering that the American was dangerous, and then, saluting respectfully as he took his leave, he said:

"The Señor De Lancey is in jail!"

They whirled their horses at that and galloped off down the cañon, and as Bud gazed after them he burst into a frenzy of curses. Then, with the one thought of setting Phil free, he ran out to the corral and hurled the saddle on his horse.

It was through some chicanery, he knew—some low-down trick on the part of Aragon—that his pardner had been imprisoned, and he swore to have him out or know the reason why. Either that or he would go after Aragon and take it out of his hide.

It was outside Bud's simple code even to question his pardner's innocence but, innocent or guilty, he would have him out if he had to tear down the jail.

So he slapped his saddle-gun into the sling, reached for his quirt, and went dashing down the cañon. At a turn in the road he came suddenly upon Aragon and the *rural*, split a way between them, and leaned forward as Copper Bottom burned up the trail.

It was long since the shiny sorrel had been given his head, and he needed neither whip nor spurs—but a mile or two down the arroyo Bud suddenly reined him in and looked behind. Then he turned abruptly up the hillside and jumped him out on a point, looked again, and rode slowly back up the trail.

Aragon and the *rural* were not in sight—the question was, were they following? For a short distance he rode warily, not to be surprised in his suspicion; then, as he found tracks turning back, he gave head to his horse and galloped swiftly to camp.

The horses of the men he sought stood at the edge of the mine-dump and, throwing his bridle-rein down beside them, Bud leaped off and ran up the cut. Then he stopped short and reached for his six-shooter. The two men were up at the end,

down on their knees, and digging like dogs after a rabbit.

So eager were they in their search, so confident in their fancied security, that they never looked up from their work, and the tramp of Hooker's boots was drowned by their grubbing until he stood above them. There he paused, his pistol in hand, and waited grimly for developments.

"Ha!" cried Aragon, grabbing at a piece of quartz that came up; "*Aquí lo tengo.*" He drew a second piece from his pocket and placed them together. "It is the same!" he said.

Still half-buried in the excavation, he turned suddenly, as a shadow crossed him, to get the light, and his jaw dropped at the sight of Bud.

"I'll trouble you for that rock," observed Bud, holding out his hand, and as the *rural* jumped, Aragon handed over the ore. There was a moment's silence as Bud stood over them—then he stepped back and motioned them out with his gun.

Down the jagged cut they hurried, awed into a guilty silence by his anger, and when he let them mount without a word the *rural* looked back, surprised. Even then Bud said nothing, but the swing of the Texan's gun spoke for him, and they rode quickly out of sight.

"You dad-burned greasers!" growled Bud, returning his pistol with a jab to its holster. Then he looked at the ore. There were two pieces, one fresh-dug and the other worn, and as he gazed at them the worn piece seemed strangely familiar. Aragon had been comparing them—but where had he got the worn piece?

Once more Bud looked it over, and then the rock fell from his hand. It was the first piece they had found—the piece that belonged to Phil!

XV

WHEN the solid earth quakes, though it move but a thousandth of an inch beneath our feet, the human brain reels and we become dizzy, sick, and afraid. So, too, at the thought that some trusted friend has played us false, the mind turns back upon itself and we doubt the stability of everything—for a moment. Then, as we find all the trees straight up, the world intact, and the hills in their proper places, we cast the treacherous doubts aside and listen to the voice of reason.

For one awful moment Hooker saw him-

self betrayed by his friend, either through weakness or through guile; and then his mind straightened itself and he remembered that Phil was in jail.

What more natural, then, than that the *rurales* should search his pockets and give the ore to Aragon? He stooped and picked up the chunk of rock—that precious, pocket-worn specimen that had brought them the first sure promise of success—and wiped it on his sleeve.

Mechanically he placed it beside the other piece which Aragon had gouged from the ledge, and while he gazed at them he wondered what to do—to leave their mine and go to his friend, or to let his friend wait and stand guard by their treasure—and his heart told him to go to his friend.

So he swung up on his horse and followed slowly, and as soon as it was dark he rode secretly through Old Fortuna and on till he came to the jail. It was a square stone structure, built across the street from the *cantina* in order to be convenient for the drunks, and as Bud rode up close and stared at it, some one hailed him through the bars.

"Hello there, pardner," called Hooker, swinging down and striding over to the black window, "how long have they had you in here?"

"Two days," answered Phil from the inner darkness; "but it seems like a lifetime to me. Say, Bud, there's a Mexican in here that's got the jimjams—regular *tequila* jag—can't you get me out?"

"Well, I sure will!" answered Bud; "what have they got you in for? Where's our friend, Don Juan? Why didn't he let me know?"

"You can search me!" railed De Lancey. "Seems like everybody quits you down here the minute you get into trouble. I got arrested night before last by those damned *rurales*—Manuel Del Rey was behind it, you can bet your life on that—and I've been here ever since!"

"Well, what are you pinched for? Who do I go and see?"

"Pinched for nothing!" cried De Lancey bitterly. "Pinched because I'm a Mexican citizen and can't protect myself! I'm *incomunicado* for three days!"

"Well, I'll get you out, all right," said Hooker, leaning closer against the bars. "Here, have a smoke—did they frisk you of your makings?"

"No!" snapped De Lancey crossly,

"but I'm out of everything by this time. Bud, I tell you I've had a time of it! They threw me in here with this crazy, murdering Mexican and I haven't had a wink of sleep for two days. He's quiet now, but I don't want any more."

"Well, say," began Bud again, "what are you charged with? Maybe I can grease somebody's paw and get you out to-night!"

There was an awkward pause at this, and finally De Lancey dropped his white face against the bars and his voice became low and beseeching.

"I'll tell you, Bud," he said, "I haven't been quite on the square with you—I've been holding out a little. But you know how it is—when a fellow's in love. I've been going to see Gracia!"

"Oh!" commented Hooker, and stood very quiet while he waited.

"Yes, I've been going to see her," hurried on Phil. "I know I promised; but honest, Bud, I couldn't help it. It just seemed as if my whole being was wrapped up in her, and I had to do it. She'd be looking for me when I came and went—and then I fixed it with her maid to take her a letter. And then I met her secretly, back by the garden gate. You know they've got some holes punched in the wall—loopholed during the fight last summer—and we'd—"

"Sure, I'll take your word for that," broke in Hooker harshly. "But get to the point! What are you pinched for?"

"Well," went on De Lancey, his voice quavering at the reproof, "I was going to tell you, if you'll listen to me. Somebody saw us there and told Aragon—he shut her up for a punishment and she slipped me out a note. She was lonely, she said. And that night—well, I couldn't stand it—I hired the string band and we went down there in a hack to give her a serenade. But this cad, Manuel del Rey, who has been acting like a jealous ass all along, swooped down on us with a detachment of his *rurales* and took us all to jail. He let the musicians out the next morning, but I've been here ever since."

"Yes, and what are you charged with?" demanded Bud bruskiy.

"Drunk," confessed Phil, and Bud grunted.

"Huh!" he said, "and me out watching that mine night and day!"

"Oh, I know I've done you dirt, Bud,"

wailed De Lancey; "but I didn't mean to, and I'll never do it again."

"Never do what?" inquired Bud roughly.

"I won't touch another drop of booze as long as I'm in Mexico!" cried Phil. "Not a drop!"

"And how about the girl?" continued Bud inexorably. "Her old man was out and tried to jump our mine to-day—how about her?"

"Well," faltered De Lancey, "I'll—she—"

"You know your promise!" reminded Bud.

"Yes; I know. But—oh, Bud, if you knew how loyal I've been to you—if you knew what offers I've resisted—the mine stands in my name, you know."

"Well?"

"Well, Aragon came around to me last week and said if I'd give him a half interest in it he'd—well, never mind—it was a great temptation. But did I fall for it? Not on your life! I know you, Bud, and I know you're honest—you'd stay by me to the last ditch, and I'll do the same by you. But I'm in love, Bud, and that would make a man forget his promise if he wasn't true as steel."

"Yes," commented Hooker dryly. "I don't reckon I can count on you much from now on. Here, take a look at this and see what you make of it." He drew the piece of ore that he had taken from Aragon from his pocket and held it up in the moonlight. "Well, feel of it, then," he said. "Shucks, you ought to know that piece of rock, Phil—it's the first one we found in our mine!"

"No!" exclaimed De Lancey, starting back; "why—where'd you get it?"

"Never mind where I got it!" answered Hooker. "The question is: What did you do with it?"

"Well, I might as well come through with it," confessed Phil, the last of his assurance gone. "I gave it to Gracia!"

"And I took it away from Aragon," continued Bud, "while he was digging some more chunks out of our mine. So that is your idea of being true as steel, is it? You've done noble by me and Kruger, haven't you? Yes, you've been a good partner, I don't think!"

"Well, don't throw me down, Bud!" pleaded Phil. "There's some mistake somewhere. Her father must have found

it and taken it away! I'd stake my life on it that Gracia would never betray me!"

"Well, think it over for a while," suggested Bud, edging his words with sarcasm. "I'm going up to the hotel!"

"No; come back!" cried De Lancey, clamoring at the bars. "Come on back, Bud! Here!" he said, thrusting his hand out through the heavy irons. "I'll give you my word for it—I won't see her again until we get our title! Will that satisfy you? Then give me your hand, pardner—I'm sorry I did you wrong!"

"It ain't me," replied Hooker soberly, as he took the trembling hand; "it's Kruger. But if you'll keep your word, Phil, maybe we can win out yet. I'm going up to find the *comisario*."

A brief interview with that smiling individual and the case of Phil De Lancey was laid bare. He had been engaged in a desperate rivalry with Manuel del Rey for the hand of Gracia Aragon, and his present incarceration was not only for singing rag-time beneath the Aragon windows, but for trying to whip the captain of the *rurales* when the latter tried to place him under arrest.

And De Lancey was the prisoner not of the *comisario*, but of the captain of the *rurales*. Sore at heart, Bud rode up through the Mexican quarters to the *cuartel* of the *rurales*, but the captain was inexorable.

"No, *señor*," he said, waving an eloquent finger before his nose, "I cannot release your friend. No, *señor*!"

"But what is he charged with?" persisted Bud, "and when is his trial? You can't keep him shut up without a trial."

At this the captain of the *rurales* lifted his eyebrows and one closely waxed *mustachio* and smiled mysteriously.

"Y *como no*?" he inquired. "And why not? Is he not a Mexican citizen?"

"Well, perhaps he is!" thundered Bud, suddenly rising to his full height, "but I am not! I am an American, *Señor Capitán*, and there are other Americans! If you hold my friend without a trial I will come and tear your jail down—and the *comisario* will not stop me, either!"

"Ah!" observed the dandy little captain, shrugging his *mustachio* once more and blinking, and while Hooker raged back and forth he looked him over appraisingly.

"One moment!" he said at last, raising a quieting hand. "These are perilous

times, *señor*, in which all the defenders of Fortuna should stand together. I do not wish to have a difference with the Americans when Bernardo Bravo and his men are marching to take our town. No, I value the friendship of the valiant Americans very highly—so I will let your friend go. But first he must promise me one thing—not to trouble the *Señor Aragon* by making further love to his daughter!"

"Very well!" replied Bud. "He has already promised that to me; so come on and let him out."

"To you?" repeated Manuel del Rey with a faint smile. "Then, perhaps—"

"Perhaps nothing!" broke in Hooker shortly. "Come on!"

He led the way impatiently while the captain, his saber clanking, strode out and rode beside him. He was not a big man, this swashing captain of the rural police, but he was master, nevertheless, of a great district, from Fortuna to the line, with a reputation for quick work in the pursuance of his duty as well as in the primrose ways of love.

In the insurrections and raidings of the previous summer he had given the *coup de grace* with his revolver to more than one embryo bandit, and in his love-affairs he had shown that he could be equally summary.

The elegant Feliz Luna, who for a time had lingered near the charming Gracia, had finally found himself up against a pair of pistols with the option of either fighting Captain del Rey or returning to his parents. The young man concluded to beat a retreat. For a like offense Philip De Lancey had been unceremoniously thrown into jail; and now the *capitan* turned his attention to Bud Hooker, whose mind he had not yet fathomed.

"Excuse me, *señor*," he said, after a brief silence, "but your words left me in doubt—whether to regard you as a friend or a rival."

"What?" demanded Bud, whose knowledge of Spanish did not extend to the elegancies.

"You said," explained the captain politely, "that your friend had promised you he would not trouble the lady further. Does that mean that you are interested in her yourself, or merely that you perceive the hopelessness of his suit and wish to protect him from a greater evil that may well befall him? For look you, *señor*, the

girl is mine, and no man can come between us!"

"Huh!" snorted Bud, who caught the last all right. Then he laughed shortly and shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said gruffly, "but he will stay away, all right."

"*Muy bien*," responded Del Rey carelessly and, dismounting at the jail, he threw open the door and stood aside for his rival to come out.

"*Muchas gracias, Señor Capitan*," saluted Bud, as the door clanged to behind his pardner. But Phil still bristled with anger and defiance, and the captain perceived that there would be no thanks from him.

"It is nothing," he replied, bowing politely, and something in the way he said it made De Lancey choke with rage. But there by the *cárcel* door was not the place for picking quarrels. They went to the hotel, where Don Juan, all apologies for his apparent neglect—which he excused on the ground that De Lancey had been held *incomunicado*—placated them as best he could and hurried on to the news.

"My gracious, Don Felipe," he cried, "you don't know how sorry I was to see you in jail, but the captain's orders were that no one should go near you—and in Mexico we obey the *rurales*, you know. Otherwise we are placed against a wall and shot.

"But have you heard the news from down below? Ah, what terrible times they are having there—ranches raided, women stolen, rich men held for ransom! Yes, it is worse than ever! Already I am receiving telegrams to prepare rooms for the refugees, and the people are coming in crowds.

"Our friend, the Señor Luna, and his son Feliz have been taken by Bernardo Bravo! Only by an enormous ransom was he able to save his wife and daughters, and his friends must now pay for him.

"At the ranch of the rich Spaniard, Alvarez, there has been a great battle in which the red-flaggers were defeated with losses. Now Bernardo Bravo swears he will avenge his men, and Alvarez has armed his Yaqui workmen.

"He is a brave man, this Colonel Alvarez, and his Yaquis are all warriors from the hills; but Bernardo has gathered all the *insurrectos* in the country together—Campos, Rojas, the brothers Escaboza—and

they may crush him with their numbers. But now there is other news—that they are marching upon Fortuna and El Tigre, to seize the mines and mills and hold the rich American companies up for ransom.

"No, *señores*, you must not return to your camp. Remain here, and you shall still have your room, though Spanish gentlemen sleep on the floors. No, allow me, Don Felipe! I wish to show you how highly I value your friendship! Only because we cannot disobey the *rurales* did I suffer you to lie in jail; but now you shall be my guest, you shall—"

"Nope," answered Bud; "we're safer out at the mine."

He glanced at De Lancey, in whose mind rosy visions were beginning to gather, and he, too, declined—with a sigh.

"Make it a bed for the night," he said. "I've got to get out of this town before I tangle with Del Rey again and find myself back in jail. And now lead me to it—I'm perishing for a bath and a sleep!"

They retired early and got up early—for Bud was haunted by fears. But as they passed through Old Fortuna the worst happened to him—they met Gracia, mounted on a prancing horse and followed by a *rural* guard, and she smote him to the heart with a smile.

It was not a smile for Phil, gone astray and wounding by chance; it was a dazzling, admiring smile for Bud alone, and he sat straighter in his saddle. But Phil uttered a groan and struck his horse with the quirt.

"She cut me!" he moaned.

"Aw, forget it!" growled Bud, and they rode on their way in silence.

XVI

At their camp by the Eagle Tail mine, even though they held it still and were heirs to half its gold, the two pardners were glum and sorrowful. The treacheries which Bud had forgiven in a moment of exaltation came back to him now as he brooded; and he eyed his friend askance, as if wondering what he would do next.

He recalled all the circumstances of their quest—the meeting with Kruger, Phil's insistence on the adventure, the oath of loyalty which they had sworn; and then the gradual breaking down of their brotherly devotion until now they were strangers at heart.

Phil sat by himself, keeping his thoughts

to himself, and he stood aloof while he waited for the worst to happen.

From the first day of their undertaking Hooker had felt that it was unlucky, and now he knew that the end was coming. His friend was lost to him, lost alike to a sense of loyalty and honor; he gloomed by himself and thought only of Gracia Aragon.

The oath which Phil himself had forced upon Bud was broken and forgotten; but Bud, by a sterner standard, felt bound to keep his part. One thing alone could make him break it—his word to Henry Kruger. The Eagle Tail mine he held in trust, and half of it was Kruger's.

"Phil," he said at last, when his mind was weary of the ceaseless grind of thoughts, "I believe that mineral agent is holding back our papers. I believe old Aragon has passed him a hundred or so and they're in cahoots to rob us. But I'll tell you what I'll do—you give me a power of attorney to receive those papers for you, and I'll go in and talk Dutch to the whole outfit."

"What do you want to do that for?" demanded De Lancey querulously. "Why can't you wait a while? Those papers have to go to Moctezuma and Hermosillo and all over the City of Mexico and back, and it takes time. What do you want to make trouble for?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Phil," answered Bud honestly. "I've got a hunch if we don't grab them papers soon we won't get 'em at all. Here these rebels are working closer all the time, and Aragon is crowding us. I want to get title and turn it over to Kruger, before we lose out somewhere."

"What's the matter with me going in and talking to the agent?" suggested Phil. Then, as he saw his pardner's face, he paused and laughed bitterly.

"You don't trust me any more, do you, Bud?" he said.

"Well, it ain't that so much," evaded Hooker; "but I sure don't trust that Manuel del Rey. The first time you go into town he's going to pinch you, and I know it."

"I'm going to go in all the same," declared De Lancey, "and if the little squirt tries to stop me—"

"Aw, Phil," entreated Bud, "be reasonable, can't ye? You got no call to go up against that little feller. He's a bad actor, I can see that, and I believe he'd kill you if he got the chance. But wait a little

while—maybe he'll get took off in the fights this summer!"

"No, he's too cursed mean for that!" muttered De Lancey, but he seemed to take some comfort in the thought.

As for Bud, he loafed around for a while, cleaning up camp, making smoke for the absent Yaqui, and looking over the deserted mine, but something in the changed atmosphere made him restless and uneasy.

"I wonder where that dogged Indian went to," he said for the hundredth time, as the deep shadows gathered in the valley. "By Joe, Phil, if Amigo comes back I'm going to go ahead on that mine. I want to keep him around here, and we might as well get out some ore, if it's only for a grub-stake. Come on—what do you say? We'll open her up—there's nothing to hide now. Well, I'll do it myself, then—this setting around is getting on my nerves."

His far-seeing eyes, trained from his boyhood to search the hills for cattle, scanned the tops of the ridges as he spoke; and while he sat and pondered they noted every rock.

Then at last he rose up slowly and gazed at a certain spot. He waved his arm, beckoning the distant point of blackness to come in, and soon from around a point in the cañon the Yaqui appeared, bearing a heavy Mauser rifle on his arm.

Across his broad breast hung the same familiar cartridge-belt, two more encircled his hips, and he walked with his head held high, like the warrior that he was.

Evidently his flight had led to the place where his arms had been hid, for he wore the regulation knife-bayonet at his hip and around his hat was the red ribbon of his people, but Bud was too polite to ask him about his journey. Since his coming the Yaqui had always maintained a certain mystery, and now, though his eyes were big with portent and he smiled at the jests about his gun, he simply waved his hand to the south and east and murmured:

"*Muchos revoltosos!*"

"*Seguro!*" answered Bud jokingly; "but have you killed any?"

"Not yet!" returned the Indian, and he did not smile at that.

"I wonder what that Indian is waiting around here for?" remarked Phil in English. "He must have his eye on somebody."

"Yeah, I bet," agreed Bud, regarding his savage friend with a speculative in-

terest. "Most of them Yaqui soldiers was farm-hands in this country before they rounded them up. I reckon he's looking for the man that had him deported.

"Tired, Amigo?" he inquired in Spanish, and Ignacio gravely acknowledged that he was, a little.

"Then drink plenty coffee," went on Hooker. "Eat lots—to-morrow we go to work in the mine."

"To-morrow?" repeated the Indian, as if considering his other engagements; "good!" He nodded a smiling assent.

After a month and more of idleness Bud and Amigo performed prodigies of labor in the cut, rolling down boulders, lifting them up on the tram, and clearing away the face of the cliff. Their tram was ramshackle, their track the abandoned rails from older workings, and their tools little more than their hands, but by noon the last broken fragments were heaved aside and the shattered ledge revealed.

A low cry of wonder escaped the Yaqui as he gazed at the rich vein of ore, and as he saw the grim smile on Bud's rugged countenance he showed his white teeth in sympathy.

"*Que bueno!*" he murmured. "How good!" gathering the precious fragments in his handkerchief.

At the camp they crushed the picked ore in a mortar and panned it in the creek, and for the moment De Lancey dropped his air of preoccupation as he stared at the streak of pure gold. Like a yellow film it lay along the edge of the last fine tailings, and when skilful washing had left it bare, it gleamed like a jewel in the pan.

"By Jove, Bud!" he cried, "that's the real stuff—and it goes a dollar to the pan easy!"

"Sure thing!" assented Bud. "Let's pound a lot of it and wash it as we go—then we'll have some getaway money when things break loose here!"

"I'll go you!" answered Phil, and Bud's heart warmed toward him as he watched him pound up a piece of ore and go to swirling the dirt in the pan.

But alas for the fond hopes he cherished! Even as he washed out the gold Phil's mind wandered far away, back to the hotel where Gracia Aragon sat watching by the window.

Her hair was the color of gold, spun fine and refined again; yes, it was worth more than this golden dross that he caught

in the bottom of his pan. And what was gold if he could not have her?

He paused in his labor and a dreamy smile parted his lips—then he broke into a song:

"Sweet honey-bee, be sweet to me,
My heart is free, but here's the key;
Lock up the garden gate; honey, you know
I'll wait,
Under the rambler rose tree-ee."

Once more he returned to his work, humming now the dulcet strains of "The Merry Widow," and when Bud came back from the cut it was to hear a coon song:

"'Cos I want yer, ma honey, yes, I want yer,
want yer, want yer;
'Cos I want yer, ma honey, yes, I do!"

So he labored and sang, until finally the labor ceased, and then the song. He went about other things, and other thoughts, not so cheerful, filled his mind.

Bud returned sadly to the company of the Yaqui and gave it up. Perhaps his pardner had been right when, riding out of Agua Negra, he had enlarged upon the dangers of Old Mexico, "the land of *mañana* and broken promises." Certainly his speech had been prophetic in regard to dark-eyed women; for, even as he had said, nothing seemed to please them better than to come between man and man.

It was a madness, he felt sure—the spell of the hot country, where the women look out from behind barred windows and men sing beneath their balconies at midnight. Already it had cost him his pardner—would it conquer *his* will as well and make him forget his trust?

In his impotence the idea of some perverse fate—some malign influence over which he had no control—was strong with Hooker; yet when the blow fell he was not prepared for it. It was the third day of their mining and, with Amigo, he had been driving into the face of the cliff.

Already their round of holes was drilled, the fuses cut, the charges set, and as he retreated before the blast he noticed absently that Cruz Mendez was in camp. The shots followed, one after another, and he counted them to make sure there was no miss-fire—then he looked around and discovered that Phil was gone.

"Where is Don Felipe?" he inquired of Mendez, and that low-browed brother of the burro bowed fawningly before he replied.

"He has gone to Fortuna," he said, wiping his face with the bath-towel which he wore about his neck.

"And what for?" demanded Bud imperatively.

"I don't know, *señor*," writhed Mendez. "I brought him a letter."

"From whom?"

"I don't know—it was given to me by Juana, the servant of the *Señorita Aragon*."

"Ah!" breathed Bud, and pretended not to be surprised.

"Well, let 'im go!" he said to himself, and went back into the mine. It was what he had expected, in a way, and his code bade him keep his hands off. But the next morning, when the evil was either avoided or done, he thrust his rifle into its sling and started for the town. At the jail he halted and gazed in through the windows—then he rode up to the hotel and asked for Phil.

"What? Have you not heard?" clamored Don Juan. "Ah, it is most unfortunate—I would not have had it happen for the world!"

"What?" inquired Bud succinctly.

"Why, the quarrel—the encounter with *Capitan del Rey*! I did my best, I assure you, to prevent it, for the town has been put under martial law and the captain is in full charge. They quarreled over the favor of a lady, and now your friend is in jail."

"I didn't see him when I come by," observed Hooker.

"Ah, no—not in the *cárcel*—in the *cuartel*, the guard-house of the *rurales*!"

"Much obliged!" nodded Bud, and rode on through the town. The street of the Mexican quarter was filled with strange people hurrying to and fro; long pack-trains loaded with trunks and curious bundles came swinging up from below; and a pair of *rurales*, looking fierce under their huge sombreros stood guard by the *cuartel* door.

"Where is the *capitan*?" demanded Hooker. After requesting him to hang his pistol-belt on his saddle-horn, a sergeant showed him in to the chief.

Manuel del Rey was very busy with papers and orders, but as the American appeared in the doorway he rose and greeted him with a bow.

"Ah, good morning, *señor*," he said, with one swift glance to read his mood. "You are in search of your friend—no?"

"*Sí, señor*," answered Hooker, but with none of the animosity which the captain had expected. "Where is he?"

"I regret very much," began the officer, speaking with military formality, "but it is my duty to inform you that the *Señor De Lancey* has left Fortuna. Last night he did me the honor to enlist in my company of *rurales*—he is now on his way to the north to assist in guarding the railroad."

"What?" shouted Bud, hardly able to believe his ears. But when the captain repeated it he no longer doubted his Spanish.

"But why?" he cried; "why did he join the *rurales*?"

"Ah, *señor*," shrugged Del Rey, "was he not a Mexican citizen? Very well, then; he could be summoned for military service. But the circumstances were these. Your friend came yesterday to this town, where I am at present military commander, and made an unprovoked assault upon my person. For this, according to law, he should have been shot at sunrise. But, not wishing to occasion unpleasantness with the Americans now residing here, I offered him the alternative of military service. He is now enlisted as a *rural* for a term of five years."

"Five years!" exclaimed Hooker; and then, instead of starting the expected rough-house—upon which the *rural* guards were prepared to jump on his back—he simply threw down his hat and cursed. Not any one in particular, but everything in general; and at the end of it he turned once more upon the watchful captain.

"*Dispenseme, señor*," he said, "this is the truth, is it?"

"*Sí, señor*," returned Captain del Rey. "But before leaving with his detachment your friend wrote this letter, which he requested me to deliver to you."

He offered with a flourish a sealed envelope, from which Bud extracted a short note.

DEAR BUD:

When you get this I shall be far away. I must have been mad, but it is too late now. Rather than be executed I have enlisted as a *rural*. But I shall try to be brave for her sake. Take care of her, Bud—for me!

PHIL.

Bud read it through again and meditated ponderously. Then he folded it up and thrust it in his pocket.

"*Muchas gracias, Señor Capitan*," he said, saluting and turning upon his heel;

and while all the Mexicans marveled at the inscrutable ways of *Americanos*, he mounted and rode away.

XVII

THERE was a world of Mexicans in the plaza when Hooker rode down through the town. Never, it seemed to him, had he seen so many or liked them less.

To the handful of Americans who remained to man the mill and mine, they were easily a hundred to one; and though their eyes were wide with fear of the imminent rebels, they had an evil way of staring at him which he did not relish.

Even at the hotel, where the Spanish-Mexican aristocracy was massed ten deep, he sensed the same feeling of veiled hostility and wondered vaguely what it might portend. If Philip De Lancey, for making love to a girl, was drafted into the army, what would happen to him if these people should ever break loose? And did they have the courage to do their worst?

He lingered around the door for a while, hoping to meet Don Juan or some American who would tell him the news; then, disgusted with everything, he flung away and left them to themselves. Fortuna was not a white man's country—he could see that without a diagram—but at the same time he intended to hold his mine until he could hear from Phil.

Let the tides of insurrection come and go, let the red-flags take the town and the Federals take it back again—at the end he would still be found at the Eagle Tail, unless Phil received his title to the mine.

As for Aragon, whose fine Italian hand he perceived behind the sudden taking off of Phil, let him make what trades he would with the *rurales* and Manuel del Rey, even to the giving of his daughter's hand; but if, taking advantage of the unsettled times, he dared to try to steal their mine, then there would be war to the knife.

It is a fine, comforting thing to be single-minded and of one purpose. All the rest of life is simplified and ordered then, and a man knows when to raise his hand and when to hold it back.

In his letter Phil had said nothing about their mine, but he was a Mexican citizen still, and the mine was in his name. Bud was his pardner and free to hold it in his stead; and that he determined to do—not only hold it, but work it for a stake. Then, when the title was passed and all made

certain, they could turn it over to Kruger and quit the accursed country.

As for the girl, Bud decided that she could take care of herself without any assistance from him, and dismissed her from his mind.

Back at the mine he found Amigo guarding camp from the hilltop, and after telling him the gist of his troubles, the two of them went to work. Every day, while one of them dug out the ore, the other crushed and washed it and watched as he horned out the gold. Their rifles they kept beside them and pistols in their belts; and every time a Mexican dropped into camp, as one did now and then in the general unrest, he felt the silent menace of arms in readiness and continued on his way.

For a week they labored on together, grim, watchful, expectant—then, at the break of day, they heard a distant rattle of arms, like the tearing of a cloth, and knew that the battle was on.

The great whistle at Fortuna opened with its full, bass roar, and Amigo snatched up his gun and went loping down the cañon, drawn irresistibly by the sound of conflict. Bud lingered, climbing higher and higher to get a view of the country. But his young blood clamored for action too, and soon he was mounted and gone.

The fighting was not at the American town, but down the valley by Old Fortuna, and as Hooker galloped on toward the sound of the firing he noticed that it was on the move. Already the cowardly rebels were retreating—the volunteers from Fortuna were hurrying to get closer to them, the *rurales* were riding to flank them; and when Bud jumped his horse up the last hill and looked down into the broad, cultivated valley he saw the dust of their flight.

Down the fenced trail that led to the lower country the mounted *insurrectos* were spurring in a rout; across the newly plowed fields of Aragon the men on foot were making a short cut for the hills; and all about them, like leaping grasshoppers, sprang up puffs of dust.

Now they plunged into the willow brush along the river, where it swung in against the ridge; and as their pursuers broke into the open they halted and returned the fire. The bullets struck up the dust like hailstones in front of the oncoming irregulars, a man or two in the lead went down, and they faltered. Then, as frantically as the rebels, they turned and ran for cover.

While defenders and invaders shot back and forth across the broad field, Bud put spurs to his horse and rode closer, and when he came out on another hilltop he was just in time to see the *rurales* come pelting in from the west and take the *revoltosos* on the flank. There was a great deal of long-distance firing then, while the rebels slowly retreated, and finally, with a last defiant volley, the defenders turned back from their pursuit and marched triumphantly to Old Fortuna.

There, amid numerous *vivas*, Don Cipriano rolled out a cask of *mescal* and, after a fiery speech, invited the victors to help themselves. So they fell to drinking and carousing, and the one defender who had been wounded was bandaged and made much of, while a great crowd from the upper town looked on in awe and admiration.

At last Manuel del Rey and his *rurales* returned from harassing the enemy and, with several wounded prisoners in their midst, the valor-drunk Mexicans formed a riotous procession and went marching back to town. Every horse and mule was carrying double, guns were being dropped, broad hats knocked off, and ever, as they marched, they shouted:

"Viva Madero! Viva Mejico! Muerte á los revoltosos!"

It was an edifying spectacle to an American, and with the rest Bud tagged along to the plaza, where they had speeches and cheers galore and more *mescal* at the company's *cantina*. But in the midst of it, while he sat laughing on his horse by the hotel, Bud felt a gravel strike his broad hat from above and, looking furtively up, he beheld Gracia Aragon smiling down at him from the balcony.

She beckoned him with a swift movement and gazed out over the assemblage again, and after a few moments of deliberation Hooker tied his horse and wandered into the hotel.

A tingle of excitement went over him as he tramped up to the ladies' parlor, for he had never met Gracia face to face. But he disguised his qualms by assuming a masklike grimness of countenance and, when the glorious Gracia glided out of her room to meet him, he only blinked and stood pat.

A long experience as a poker-player was all that saved him from betrayal, for there was something in her very presence which

made his heart leap and pound. But he only gazed at her somberly, without even so much as raising his hat.

Back in Texas, in his social world, it was considered almost unmanly to thus salute the ladies. So he stood there, his big sombrero pulled down over his mop of light hair, gazing at her without a blink.

Perhaps it was not altogether as friendly a scrutiny of her charming features as Gracia expected, for he remembered what she had done to his pardner; but if she sensed such a rare thing as disapproval from a young man, she was too excited to show it. Her lips trembled, and she looked back furtively, meanwhile drawing him into an alcove by the slightest twitch of his sleeve.

"Don't talk too loud," she whispered. "My mother is listening from the room—but for the love of God, tell me, where is Phil?"

"I don't know," answered Bud, trying to lower his big voice to a boudoir softness; "he joined the *rurales* and was ordered north—that's all I know."

"Yes, yes, to be sure; but haven't you heard from him?"

She seemed to be all impatience to snatch his news and fly with it, but Bud was in no such hurry. And so far was he from being a carpet knight that he immediately raised his voice to its normal bass. It was all right for Phil and his kind to talk by signs and whispers, but that was not his style.

"Not since he went away," he said. "He left me a little note, then, saying—"

"Saying what?" she demanded breathlessly.

"Well, saying that he had enlisted to keep from being executed, and—that's about all!"

"And not a word about me?"

"Yes," admitted Bud; "he said he'd try to put up with it—on account of you—and—"

"What?" she entreated, taking him beseechingly by the coat.

"Well," stammered Hooker, shifting his feet and looking away, "he told me to kinder take care of you—while he was gone."

"Ah!" she breathed, still standing close to him, "and will you do it?"

"I reckon so," said Bud, "if we have any trouble."

"But I'm in trouble now!" she cried.

"I'm watched—I can't get away—and I'm afraid!"

"Afraid of what?" he demanded.

"Of him!" she answered, her voice breaking; "of Manuel del Rey!"

"Well," replied Hooker bluntly, "I've got nothing to do with that—I can't interfere in your love-affairs—but if they's war and they try to take the town, you can count on me."

"Oh, thank you," she said, bowing satirically. "And do you expect a war?"

"Not with that bunch of *hombres!*" returned Bud, waving a disparaging hand toward the noise of the shouting. At this she broke down and laughed. Evidently she was not so fearful of discovery after all.

"You forget, sir," she said, "that I am a Mexican!"

Then, as he failed to show any signs of contrition, she changed her mood again.

"But wait!" she ran on, her eyes flashing. "Perhaps we are not so eager to defend our government when we have a new one every year. But if the men who are gathering in Chihuahua invade our country, you will find that as Sonorans those men will fight to the death."

"You laugh because you do not understand. But why should we Sonorans fight side by side with the Federals and *rurales*? Are they not the soldiers of Diaz, who have simply changed to another master? That Manuel del Rey was last year hunting down Maderistas in the hills; now he is fighting for Madero! And to-morrow? Who can say?"

She shrugged her shoulders scornfully, and Hooker perceived that she was in earnest in her dislike of the dashing captain, but prudence warned him to say nothing if he would escape being drawn into the quarrel.

"No!" she went on, after an expectant pause, "let the *rurales* pursue these bandits—they are hired for that purpose! But if Orozco and Salazar join this *ladron*, Bernardo Bravo, and seek to capture our towns, then, Señor Americano, you will see real war and men fighting to the death! Ah, you laugh again—you are a Texan and judge us Sonorans by the cowardly Chihuahuans—but it is the truth. And I, for one," she added naively, "would be almost glad to have war. Do you know why? To see if you would really defend me!"

She smiled, looking frankly into his eyes, and Bud blushed to the roots of his hair, but once again he held his peace.

"What, *señor!*" she bantered; "you do not speak? Surely, then, your friend De Lancey was wrong when he said you would save me! For look, Mr. Hooker, I am promised to marry dear Phil; but how can I manage that when Manuel del Rey is watching me? It is impossible, is it not?"

"Seems so," muttered Bud, and in the back of his head he began to think quickly. Here was the fountainhead of his misfortunes, and if she had her way she would lay all his plans in ruins—and even then not marry Phil. In fact, from the light way she spoke, he sensed that she did not intend to marry him. Her grudge was against Manuel del Rey who drove away all her lovers.

"Well," he ventured, "there's no rush, I reckon—Phil's enlisted for five years."

"Ha!" she cried contemptuously; "and do you think he will serve? No! At a word from me he will flee to the border and I shall join him in the United States!"

"What?" demanded Bud; "Phil desert?"

In a moment he saw what such a move would mean to him—to Kruger and the Eagle Tail—and he woke suddenly from his calm.

"Here now," he said, scowling as he saw that she was laughing at him, "you've made me and Phil enough trouble. You let that boy alone, savvy?"

He stooped toward her as he spoke, fixing her with masterful eyes that had tamed many a bad horse and man, and she shrank away instinctively. Then she glanced at him shyly and edged over toward the open door.

"I will do what I please, Mr. Hooker," she returned, balancing on the verge of flight.

"All right," Bud came back; "but don't you call me in on it. You've made a fool out of Phil—I suppose you'd like to get me, too. Then your father would grab our mine."

"What do you mean?" she challenged, turning back upon him.

"I mean this," responded Hooker warmly. "Phil holds the title to our mine. If he deserts he loses his Mexican citizenship and his claim is no good. But you don't need to think that your father will get the

mine then, because he'll have to whip me first!"

"O-ho!" she sneered; "so that is what you are thinking of? You are a true gringo, Mr. Hooker—always thinking about the money!"

"Yes," returned Bud; "and even at that I believe your old man will best me!"

She laughed again, with sudden capriciousness, and stood tapping the floor with her foot.

"Ah, I see," she said at length, gazing at him reproachfully; "you think I am working for my father. You think I got poor Phil into all this trouble in order to cheat him of his mine. But let me tell you, Señor Gringo," she cried with sudden fire, "that I did not! I have nothing to do with my father and his schemes. But if you do not trust me—"

She turned dramatically to go, but when Hooker made no effort to stay her she returned once more to the attack.

"No," she said, "it was because he was an American—because he was brave—that I put my faith in Phil. These Mexican men are cowards—they are afraid to stand up and fight! But Philip dared to make love to me—he dared to sing to me at night—and when Manuel del Rey tried to stop him he stood up and made a fight!"

"Ah, that is what I admire—a man who is brave! And let me tell you, Señor Hooker, I shall always love your friend! If I could run away I would marry him to-morrow; but this cur, Manuel del Rey, stands in the way. Even my own father is against me. But I don't care—I don't care what happens—only do not think that I am not your friend!"

She paused now and glanced at him shyly, and as her eloquent eyes met his own Bud felt suddenly that she was sincere. The gnawing and corrosive doubts that had eaten at his heart fell away, and he saw her now in her true beauty, with no uneasy thoughts of treachery to poison his honest love.

"I believe you, lady," he said. "And I'm glad to know you," he added, taking off his hat and bowing awkwardly. "Anything I can do for you, don't hesitate to ask for it—only I can't go against my pardners on this mine."

He bowed again and retreated toward the door, but she followed him impulsively.

"Shake hands," she said, holding out both her own, "and will you help me?"

"Sure!" answered Bud, and as her soft fingers closed on his he took them gently, for fear that he might crush them and never know.

XVIII

A MONTH of weary waiting followed that day of days in Fortuna, and still there was no word from Phil. Bernardo Bravo and his rebel raiders passed through the mountains to the east, and news came of heavy fighting in Chihuahua. Don Cipriano Aragon moved his family back to his hacienda and Gracia became only a dream.

Then, one day, as Hooker and the Yaqui were industriously pounding out gold, a messenger came out from town with a telegram in his hand.

Am in Gadsden. No chance to hold mine. Kruger says quit.—P.

"No, I'll be 'sarned if I do!" muttered Bud. Then he sat down to think.

"Amigo," he said to the Yaqui, "are you a Mexican citizen? Can you get title to mine?"

"Me a Mexican?" repeated Amigo, tapping himself proudly on the chest. "No, *señor! Seguro que no!*"

"All right then," observed Bud bitterly, "here goes nothing—nowhere! I'll turn Mexican myself!"

He passed the messenger on the way to town, took out his first papers as a citizen, picked up the mineral agent's expert on the way back, and located the Eagle Tail in his own name. Before riding back to camp he wired to Kruger:

Have turned Mex and relocated claim.

HOOKEE.

It was his last card, and he did not expect to win by it. Fate had been against him from the first, and he could see his finish, but his nature drove him to fight on. All that Aragon had to do now was to have *him* summoned for military service, and Del Rey would do the rest.

Then he could take over the mine. A mere formality—or so it seemed—but between Aragon and his mine stood the Texas blood. Hooker had been crowded to the wall, and he was mad enough to fight.

The news of De Lancey's desertion followed quickly after his flight—it came over the Federal wires in a report to Manuel del Rey—but by the time it got to

Aragon that gentleman was too late. They rode into camp the next day—Aragon and the captain of the *rurales*—and at the first glimpse of that hated uniform Amigo was off like a buck. Bud went out sullenly to meet them, his black mood showing in his lowering eyes, and he halted them by the savagery of his cursing.

"You cock-eyed old reprobate," he snarled, advancing threateningly upon the paling Aragon, "this makes three times you've come into my camp and brought your gun with you! Now take it off!" he yelled, dropping suddenly into Spanish. "Take that gun off—do you understand?"

So violent and unexpected was his assault that it threw Aragon into a panic, and even Manuel del Rey softened his manner as he inquired into the cause.

"Never mind," answered Bud, smiling crustily as Aragon laid aside his arms; "I know that *hombre* well! Now what can I do for you, *capitan*?"

"Be so kind as to take your hand from your belt," replied Del Rey with a smile that was intended to placate. "Ah, thank you—excuse my nerves—now I can tell you the news. I regret to inform you, *señor*, that your friend, De Lancey, has deserted from my command, taking his arms and equipment with him. In case he is captured he will be shot as a deserter."

"Your news is old, *capitan*," rejoined Hooker. "I knew it two days ago. And you can tell Mr. Aragon that it is no use for him to try to get this mine—I became a Mexican citizen yesterday and located it myself."

"So we learned," responded the captain suavely. "It was part of my errand today to ask if you would not enlist in my company of *rurales*."

"*Muchas gracias, capitan*," answered Hooker with heavy irony. "I do not care to!"

"But your friend—" protested Manuel del Rey with an insinuating smile.

"My friend was in jail," put in Bud; "he was to be shot at sunrise. But *mira, amigo*, I am *not* in jail, and, furthermore, I do not intend to be."

"That is very creditable to you," laughed Del Rey; "but even then you are entitled to enlist. The country is full of turbulent fellows who have to be caught or killed. Come now, you understand my errand—why make it hard for me?"

"No, *señor*," returned Bud grimly, "I

know nothing of your errand. But this I do know. I have done nothing for which I can be arrested, and if any man tries to make me join the army—" he hooked his thumb into his belt and regarded the captain fixedly.

"Ah, very well," said Del Rey, jerking his waxed *mustachios*, "I will not press the matter. But I understand from one of my men, *señor*, that you are harboring a dangerous criminal here—the same man, perhaps, whom I saw running up the cañon?"

He smiled meaningly at this, but Bud was swift to defend his Yaqui.

"No, *señor*," he replied, "I have no such criminal. I have a Mexican working for me who is one of the best miners in Sonora, and that is all I know about him."

"A Mexican?" repeated Del Rey, arching his eyebrows. "Excuse me, sir, but it is my business to know every man in this district, and he is no Mexican, but a Yaqui. Moreover, he is a fugitive and an outlaw, and if he had not been enlisted with the Federals I should have arrested him when he passed through Fortuna. So I warn you, sir, not to hide him, or you will be liable to the law."

"I'm not hiding him," protested Hooker scornfully. "I'm just hiring him as a miner, and any time you want him you can come and get him. He's up in the rocks there somewhere now."

"So!" exclaimed the captain, glancing uneasily at the hillside. "I did not think—but many thanks, *señor*, another time will do as well."

He reined his horse away as he spoke and, with a jerk of the head to Aragon, rode rapidly down the cañon. Aragon lingered to retrieve his fallen gun-belt and then, seeming to think better of his desire to speak, he made a single vindictive gesture and set spurs to his champing horse.

It was merely a fling of the hand, as spontaneous as a sigh or a frown, but in it Hooker read the last exasperation of the Spaniard and his declaration of war to the knife. He bared his strong teeth in reply and hissed out a blighting curse, and then Aragon was gone.

That evening, as the darkness came on and the cañon became hushed and still, Bud built a big fire and stood before it, his rugged form silhouetted against the flames. And soon, as quiet as a fox, the Yaqui appeared from the gloom.

"Did he come for me?" he asked, advancing warily into the firelight, "that *capitan*?"

"Yes," answered Bud, "and for me, too. But you must have known him before, Amigo—he seems to be afraid of you."

A smile of satisfaction passed over the swarthy face of the Indian at this, and then the lines became grim again. His eyes glowed with the light of some great purpose, and for the first time since he had been with Bud he drew aside the veil from his past.

"Yes," he said, nodding significantly, "the *rural* is afraid. He knows I have come to kill him."

He squatted by the fire and poured out a cup of coffee, still brooding over his thoughts—then, with a swift gesture, he laid open his shirt and pointed to a scar along the ribs.

"He shot me there," he said.

"And so you have come to kill him?"

"Yes," answered Amigo; "but not now. To-morrow I go to my people—I must take them my money first."

"Have you got a wife?" asked Hooker, forgetting for once his accustomed reserve.

"No," grumbled Amigo, shaking his head sadly, "no wife."

"Oh, you take your money to your father and mother."

"No. No father—no mother—*nadie*!"

He threw up his open hands to signify that all were gone, and Hooker said no more. For three months and more he had worked alongside this giant, silent Yaqui and only once had he sensed his past. That was when Amigo had torn his shirt in lifting, and across the rippling muscles of his back there had shown the long white wale of a whip.

It was the mark of his former slavery when, with the rest of his people, he had been deported to the henequen-fields of Yucatan and flogged by the overseer's lash—and Amigo was ashamed of it. But now that he was about to go, Bud made bold to ask him one more question, to set his mind at rest.

"Perhaps this captain killed your people?"

"No, *señor*," answered Amigo quietly; "they died."

He spoke the words simply, but there was something in his voice that brought up images of the past—of peaceful Yaquis,

seized at every ranch in Sonora on a certain night; of long marches overland, prodded on by *rurales* and guards; of the crowded prison-ships from which the most anguished hurled themselves into the sea; and then the awful years of slavery in the poisoned tropics, until only the hardest were left.

Amigo had seen it all, as the scars on his broad back proved—but he withdrew now into silence and left his thoughts unsaid. As he sat there by the fire, one long, black hand held out to keep the gleam from his eyes, he made a noble figure, but the Yaqui songs which he had crooned on other nights were forgotten, and he held himself tense and still. Then at last he rose and gazed at Bud.

"You pay me my money," he said. "I go now."

"Sure," answered Bud, and after he had weighed out the equivalent in gold on his scales he flipped in some more for luck and gave him a sack to hold it.

"What you buy with all that?" he inquired with a friendly grin; "grub?"

"No, *señor*," answered Amigo, knotting the precious gold in a handkerchief; "cartridges!"

"What for?" queried Bud, and then it was Amigo who smiled.

"To kill Mexicans with!" he replied, and in those words Hooker read the secret of his thrift.

While his wild brethren fought in the hills or prepared for the battles to come, it was his part to earn the money that should keep them in ammunition. It was for that, in fact, that Porfirio Diaz had seized all the peaceful Yaquis in a night and shipped them to Yucatan—for he saw that while they were working the wild Yaquis would never lack.

All the time that Amigo had been doing two men's work and saving on the price of a shirt he had held that cheerful dream in his mind—to kill more Mexicans!

Yet, despite the savagery in him, Hooker had come to like the Yaqui, and he liked him still. With the *rurales* on his trail it was better that he should go, but Bud wanted him to return. So, knowing the simple honesty of Indians, he brought out his own spare pistol and placed it in Amigo's hands. Often he had seen him gazing at it longingly, for it was lighter than his heavy Mauser and better for the journey.

"Here," he said, "I will lend you my pistol—and you can give it to me when you come back."

"Sure!" answered the Indian, hanging it on his hip; "*adios!*"

They shook hands then, and the Yaqui disappeared in the darkness. In the morning, when a squad of *rurales* closed in on the camp, they found nothing but his great tracks in the dust.

XIX

It was June and the wind-storms which had swept in from the southeast died away. No more, as in the months that had passed, did the dust-pillar rise from the dump of the Fortuna mill and go swirling up the cañon.

A great calm and heat settled over the harassed land, and above the far blue wall of the Sierras the first thunder-caps of the rainy season rose up till they obscured the sky. Then, with a rush of conflicting winds, a leaden silence, and a crash of flickering light, the storm burst in tropic fury and was gone as quickly as it had come.

So, while the rich landowners of the hot country sat idle and watched it grow, another storm gathered behind the distant Sierras; and, as empty rumors lulled them to a false security, suddenly from the north came the news of dashing raids, of railroads cut, troops routed, and the whole border occupied by swarming rebels.

In a day the southern country was isolated and cut off from escape and, while the hordes of Chihuahua *insurrectos* laid siege to Agua Negra, the belated Spanish *haciendados* came scuttling once more to Fortuna. There, at least, was an American town where the courage of the Anglo-Saxon would protect their women in extremity. And, if worst came to worst, it was better to pay ransom to red-flag generals than to fall victims to bandits and looters.

As the bass roar of the great whistle reverberated over the hills Bud Hooker left his lonely camp almost gladly, and with his hard-won gold-dust safe beneath his belt, went galloping into town.

Not for three weeks—not since he received the wire from Phil and located the Eagle Tail mine—had he dared to leave his claim. *Rurales*, outlaws, and Mexican patriots had dropped in from day to day and eaten up most of his food, but none

of them had caught him napping, and he had no intention that they should.

A conspiracy had sprung up to get rid of him, to harry him out of the country, and behind it was Aragon. But now, with the big whistle blowing, Aragon would have other concerns.

He had his wife and daughter, the beautiful Gracia, to hurry to the town, and perhaps the thought of being caught and held for ransom would deter him from stealing mines. So reasoned Bud, and, dragging a reluctant pack-animal behind him, he came riding in for supplies.

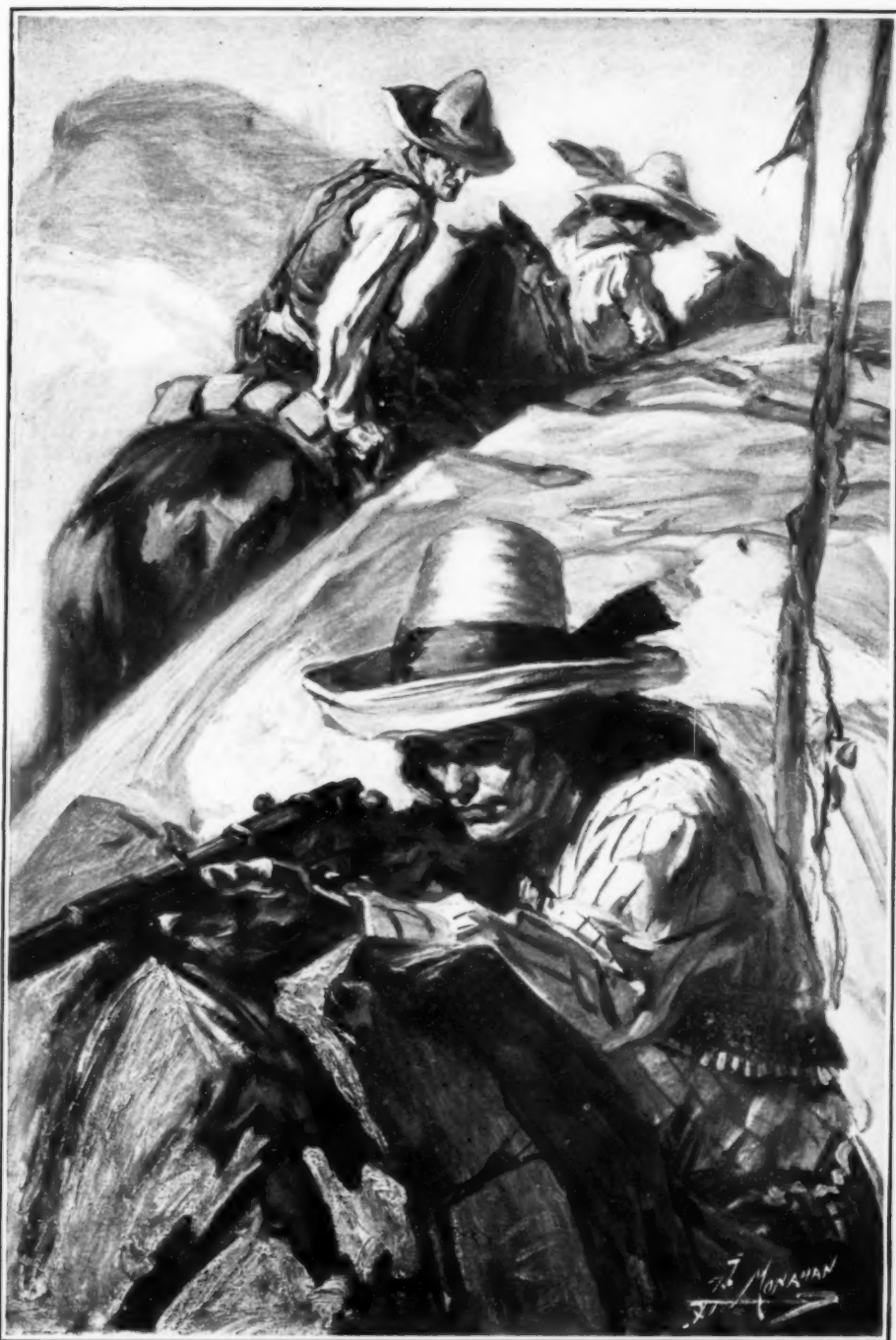
At the store he bought flour and coffee and the other things which he needed most. As he was passing by the hotel Don Juan de Dios halted him for a moment, rushing out and thrusting a bundle of letters into his hands and hurrying back into the house, as if fearful of being detected in such an act of friendship.

Long before he had lost his pardner Bud had decided that Don Juan was a trimmer, a man who tried to be all things to all people—as a good hotel-keeper should—but now he altered his opinion a little, for the letters were from Phil. He read them over in the crowded plaza, into which the first refugees were just beginning to pour, and frowned as he skimmed through the last.

Of Gracia and vain protestations of devotion there was enough and to spare, but nothing about the mine. Only in the first one, written on the very day he had deserted, did he so much as attempt an excuse for so precipitately abandoning their claim and his Mexican citizenship. Phil wrote:

My mail was being sent through headquarters and looked over by Del Rey, so I knew I would never receive the papers, even if they came. I hope you don't feel hard about it, pardner. Kruger says to come out right away. I would have stayed with it, but it wasn't any use. And now, Bud, I want to ask you something. When you come out, bring Gracia with you. Don't leave her at the mercy of Del Rey. I would come myself if it wasn't sure death. Be quick about it, Bud; I count on you.

The other letters were all like that, but nothing about the mine. And yet it was the mine that Bud was fighting for—that they had fought for from the first. The railroad was torn up now, and a flight with Gracia was hopeless, but it was just as



WITH A ROAR THAT MADE THEM JUMP THE HEAVY MAUSER SPOKE OUT—ONE SHOT—NO MORE

[See page 396]

well, for he never would abandon the Eagle Tail.

In two months, or three, when the rebels were whipped off, his papers might come. Then he could pay his taxes and transfer his title and consider the stealing of Gracia. But since he had seen her and touched her hand something held him back—a grudging reluctance—and he was glad that his duty lay elsewhere. If she was his girl now he would come down and get her anyway.

But she was not his girl and, gazing back grimly at the seething plaza and the hotel that hid her from sight, he rode somberly down the road. After all, there was nothing to get excited about—every *revoltoso* in the country was lined up around Agua Negra and, with four hundred soldiers to oppose them and artillery to shell their advance, it would be many a long day before they took that town.

Twice already Agua Negra had fallen before such attacks, but now it was protected by rifle-pits and machine guns set high on mud roofs. And then there were the Yaquis, still faithful to Madero. They alone could hold the town, if they made up their minds to fight. So reasoned Hooker, mulling over the news that he had heard. But he watched the ridges warily, for the weather was good for raiders.

A day passed, and then another, and the big whistle blew only for the shifts; the loneliness of the hills oppressed him as he gazed out at the quivering heat. And then, like a toad after a shower, Amigo came paddling into camp on the heels of a thunder-storm, his sandals hung on his hip and his big feet squelching through the mud.

Across his shoulders he wore a gay serape, woven by some patient woman of his tribe; and in the belt beside Bud's pistol he carried a heavy knife, blacksmithed from a ten-inch file by some Yaqui hillman. All in all, he was a fine barbarian, but he looked good to the lonely Bud.

"Ola, Amigo!" he hailed, stepping out from the adobe house where he had moved to avoid the rains; and Amigo answered with his honest smile which carried no hint of savagery or deceit.

Try as he would, Bud could not bring himself to think of his Yaqui as dangerous; and even when he balanced the Indian's murderous bowie-knife in his hands he regarded it with a grin. It was a heavy

weapon, broad across the back, keen on one edge, and drawn to a point that was both sharp and strong. The haft was wrapped with rawhide to hold the clutch of the hand.

"What do you do with this?" queried Hooker. "Chop wood? Skin deer?"

"Yes, chop wood!" answered Amigo, but he replaced it carefully in his belt.

He looked the adobe house over thoughtfully, listened long to the news of the border and of the *rurales'* raid on their camp, and retired to the rocks for the night. Even Bud never knew where he slept—somewhere up on the hillside—in caves or clefts in the rocks—and not even the most pressing invitation could make him share the house for a night. To Amigo, as to an animal, a house was a trap; and he knew that the times were treacherous.

So indeed they were, as Hooker was to learn to his sorrow, and but for the Yaqui and his murderous knife he might easily have learned it too late.

It was evening, after a rainless day, and Bud was cooking by the open fire, when suddenly Amigo vanished and four men rode in from above. They were armed with rifles, as befitted the times, but gave no signs of ruffianly bravado, and after a few words Bud invited them to get down and eat.

"*Muchas gracias, señor,*" said the leader, dismounting and laying his rifle against a log, "we are not hungry."

"Then have some coffee," invited Hooker, who made it a point to feed every one who stopped, regardless of their merit; and once more the Mexican declined. At this Bud looked at him sharply, for his refusal did not augur well, and it struck him the man's face was familiar. He was tall for a Mexican and heavily built, but with a rather sinister cast of countenance.

"Where have I seen you before?" asked Bud, after trying in vain to place him. "In Fortuna?"

"No, *señor,*" answered the Mexican politely. "I have never been in that city. Is it far?"

"Ten miles by the trail," responded Hooker, by no means reassured, and under pretext of inviting them to eat, he took a look at the other men. If they had not stopped to eat, what then was their errand while the sun was sinking so low? And why this sullen refusal of the coffee which every Mexican drinks?

Bud stepped into the house, as if on some errand, and watched them unseen from the interior. Seeing them exchange glances then, he leaned his rifle just inside the door and went about his cooking.

It was one of the chances he took, living out in the brush, but he had come to know this low-browed type of semibandit all too well and had small respect for their courage. In case of trouble Amigo was close by in the rocks somewhere, probably with his gun in his hand—but with a little patience and circumspection the unwelcome visitors would doubtless move on.

So he thought, but instead they lingered, and when supper was cooked he decided to go to a show-down—and if they again refused to eat he would send them on their way.

"*Ven amigos*," he said, spreading out the tin plates for them. "Come and eat!"

The three low-brows glanced at their leader, who had done what little talking there was so far, and, seized with a sudden animation, he immediately rose to his feet.

"Many thanks, *señor*," he said with a cringing and specious politeness. "We have come far and the trail is long, so we will eat. The times are hard for poor men now—this traitor, Madero, has made us all hungry. It is by him that we poor working men are driven to insurrection—but we know that the Americans are our friends. Yes, *señor*, I will take some of your beans, and thank you."

He filled a plate as he spoke and lifted a biscuit from the oven, continuing with his false patter while the others fell to in silence.

"Perhaps you have heard, *señor*," he went on, "the saying which is in the land:

**Mucho trabajo,
Poco dinero;
No hay frijoles,
Viva Madero!*

"That, in truth, is no jest to the Mexican people. This man has betrayed us all; he has ruined the country and set brother against brother. And now, while we starve because the mines are shut down, he gathers his family about him in the city and lives fat on the money he has stolen."

He ran on in this style, after the fashion of the *revoltosos*, and by the very common-

place of his fulminations Bud was thrown completely off his guard. That was the way they all talked, these worthless bandit-beggars—that and telling how they loved the *Americanos*—and then, if they got a chance, they would stick a knife in your back.

He listened to the big man with a polite toleration, being careful not to turn his back, and ate a few bites as he waited, but though it was coming dusk the Mexicans were in no hurry to depart. Perhaps they hoped to stop for the night and get him in his sleep. Still they lingered on, the leader sitting on a log and continuing his harangue.

Then, in the middle of a sentence, and while Bud was bending over the fire, the Mexican stopped short and leaned to one side. A tense silence fell, and Hooker was waked from his trance by the warning click of a gun-lock. Suddenly his mind came back to his guests, and he ducked like a flash, but even as he went down he heard the hammer *clack!*

The gun had snapped!

Instantly Hooker's hand leaped to his pistol and he fired from the hip pointblank at the would-be murderer. With a yell to the others, one of the Mexicans sprang on him from behind and tried to bear him down. They struggled for a moment while Bud shot blindly with his pistol and went down fighting.

Bud was a giant compared to the stunted Mexicans, and he threw them about like dogs that hang onto a bear. With a man in each hand he rose to his feet, crushing them down beneath him; then, in despair of shaking off his rider, he staggered a few steps and hurled himself over backward into the fire.

A yell of agony followed their fall and, as the live coals bit through the Mexican's thin shirt, he fought like a cat to get free. Rocks, pots, and kettles were kicked in every direction, and when Hooker leaped to his feet the Mexican scrambled up and rushed madly for the creek.

But, though Bud was free, the battle had turned against him, for in the brief interval of his fight the other two Mexicans had run for their guns. The instant he rose they covered him. Their chief, who by some miracle had escaped Bud's shot, gave a shout for them to halt. Cheated of his victim at the first he was claiming the right to kill.

* Much work,
Little money;
No beans.
Long live Madero!

As Hooker stood blinded by the smoke and ashes the fellow took deliberate aim—and once more his rifle snapped. Then, as the other Mexicans stood agape, surprised at the failure of the shot, the cannonlike whang of a Mauser rent the air and the leader crumpled down in a heap.

An instant later a shrill yell rose from up the cañon and, as the two Mexicans started and stared, Amigo came dashing in upon them, a spitting pistol in one hand and his terrible "wood-chopping" knife brandished high in the other.

In the dusk his eyes and teeth gleamed white, his black hair seemed to bristle with fury, and the glint of his long knife made a light as he vaulted over the last rock and went plunging on their track. For, at the first glance at this huge, pursuing figure, the two Mexicans had turned and bolted like rabbits, and now, as the Yaqui whirled in after them, Bud could hear them squealing and scrambling as he hunted them down among the rocks.

It was grim work, too; even for his stomach, but Hooker let the Indian follow his nature. When Amigo came back from his hunting there was no need to ask questions. His eyes shone so terribly that Hooker said nothing, but set about cleaning up camp.

After he had washed the ashes from his eyes, and when the fury had vanished from Amigo's face, they went as by common consent and gazed at the body of the chief of the desperadoes. Even in death his face seemed strangely familiar; but as Hooker stood gazing at him the Yaqui picked up his gun.

"Look!" he said, and pointed to a bullet-splash where, as the Mexican held the gun across his breast, Bud's pistol-shot had flattened harmlessly against the lock. It was that which had saved the Mexican chief from instant death, and the jar of the shot had doubtless broken the rifle and saved Bud, in turn, from the second shot.

All this was in the Yaqui's eye as he carefully tested the action; but, when he threw down the lever, a cartridge rose up from the magazine and glided smoothly into the breech. With a rifle full of cartridges the ignorant Mexican had been snapping on an empty chamber, not knowing enough to jack up a shell!

For a moment Amigo stared at the gun and the man, and his mouth drew down with contempt.

"Ha! *Pendejo!*" he grunted, and kicked the corpse with his foot.

But if the Mexican had been a fool, he had paid the price, for the second time he snapped his gun Amigo had shot him through and through.

XX

IN a country where witnesses to a crime are imprisoned along with the principals and kept more or less indefinitely in jail, a man thinks twice before he reports to the police.

With four dead Mexicans to the Yaqui's account, and Del Rey in charge of the district, Hooker followed his second thought—he said nothing, and took his chances on being arrested for murder. Until far into the night Amigo busied himself along the hillside, and when the sun rose not a sign remained to tell the story of the fight.

Men, horses, saddles, and guns—all had disappeared. And, after packing a little food in a sack, Amigo disappeared also, with a grim smile in promise of return.

The sun rose round and hot, the same as usual; the south wind came up and blew into a bellying mass of clouds, which lashed back with the accustomed rain; and when all the earth was washed clean and fresh the last trace of the struggle was gone. Only by the burns on his hands was Hooker aware of the fight and of the treachery which had reared its head against him like a snake which has been warmed and fed.

Nowhere but in Mexico, where the low *pelado* classes have made such deeds a subtlety, could the man be found to dissimulate like that false assassin-in-chief. To pause suddenly in a protracted speech, swing over and pick up a gun, and halt his victim for the shooting by the preparatory click of the lock—that indeed called for a brand of cunning rarely found in the United States.

There was one thing about the affair that vaguely haunted Hooker—why was it that a man so cunning as that had failed to load his gun? Twice, and with everything in his favor, he had raised his rifle to fire; and both times it had snapped in his hands. Certainly he must have been inept at arms—or accustomed to single-shot guns.

The reputed magic of the swift-firing rifles evidently had been his undoing, but where had he got his new gun? And who was he, anyway? With those two baffling

questions Bud wrestled as he sat beside his door, and at evening his answer came.

The sun was swinging low and he was collecting wood down the gulch for a fire when, with a sudden thud of hoofs, a horseman rounded the point and came abruptly to a halt. It was Aragon, and he was spying on the camp.

For a full minute he scanned the house, tent, and mine with a look so snaky and sinister that Bud could read his heart like a book. Here was the man who had sent the assassins, and he had come to view their work!

Very slowly Bud's hand crept toward his six-shooter but, slight as was the motion, Aragon caught it and sat frozen in his place. Then, with an inarticulate cry, he fell flat on his horse's neck and went spurring out of sight.

The answer to Bud's questions was very easy now. The Mexican who had led the attempt on his life was one of Aragon's bad men, one of the four gunmen whom Hooker had looked over so carefully when they came to drive him from the mine, and Aragon had fitted him out with new arms to make the result more sure. But with that question answered there came up another and another until, in a sudden clarity of vision, Bud saw through the hellish plot and beheld himself the master.

As man to man, Aragon would not dare to face him now, for he knew that he merited death. By his sly approach, by the look in his eyes and the dismay of his frenzied retreat, he had acknowledged more surely than by words his guilty knowledge of the raid. Coming to a camp where he expected to find all dead and still, he had found himself face to face with the very man he had sought to kill. How, then, had the American escaped destruction, and what had occurred to his men?

Perhaps, in his ignorance, Aragon was raging at his hirelings because they had shirked their task; perhaps, not knowing that they were dead, he was waiting in a fever of impatience for them to accomplish the deed. However it was, Bud saw that he held the high card, and he was not slow to act.

In the morning he saddled up Copper Bottom, who had been confined to the corral for weeks, and went galloping into town. There he lingered about the hotel until he saw his man and started boldly toward him. Surprise, alarm, and pitiful

fear chased themselves across Aragon's face as he stood, but Bud walked proudly by.

"Good morning, *señor!*" was all Bud said, but the look in his eyes was eloquent of a grim hereafter.

And instead of hurrying back to guard his precious mine Hooker loitered carelessly about town. His mine was safe now—and he was safe. Aragon dared not raise a hand. So he sat himself down on the broad veranda and listened with boyish interest to Don Juan's account of the war.

"What, have you not heard of the battle?" cried portly Don Juan, delighted to have a fresh listener. "Agua Negra has been taken and retaken, and the railroad will soon be repaired. My gracious! have you been out in the hills that long? Why, it was two weeks ago that the rebels captured the town by a *coup*, and eight days later the Federals took it back.

"Ah, there has been a real war, Mr. Bud! You who have laughed at the courage of the Mexicans, what do you think of Bernardo Bravo and his men? They captured the last up train from Fortuna; loaded all the men into the ore-cars and empty coaches; and, while the Federals were still in their barracks, the train ran clear into the station and took the town by storm.

"And eight days later, at sundown, the Federals took it back. Ah, there was awful slaughter averted, *señor!* But for the fact that the fuse went out the two hundred Yaqui Indians who led the charge would have been blown into eternity.

"Yes, so great was the charge of dynamite that the rebels had laid in their mine that not a house in Agua Negra would have been left standing if the fuse had done its work. Two tons of dynamite! Think of that, my friend!

"But these rebels were as ignorant of its power as they were of laying a train. The Yaquis walked into the town at sundown and found it deserted—every man, woman, and child had fled to Gadsden and the rebels had fled to the west.

"But listen, here was the way it happened—actually, and not as common report has it, for the country is all in an uproar and the real facts were never known. When Bernardo Bravo captured the town of Agua Negra the people acclaimed him a hero.

"He sent word to the junta at El Paso

and set up a new form of government. All was enthusiasm, and several Americans joined his ranks to operate the machine guns and cannon. As for the Federals, they occupied the country to the east and attempted a few sallies, but as they had nothing but their rifles, the artillery drove them back.

"Then, as the battle ceased, the rebels began to celebrate their victory. They broke into the closed *cantinas*, disobeying their officers and beginning the loot of the town, and while half of their number were drunk the Federals, being informed of their condition, suddenly advanced upon them, with the Yaquis far in the lead.

"They did not shoot, those Yaquis; but, dragging their guns behind them, they crept up through the bushes and dug pits quite close to the lines. Then, when the rebels discovered them and manned their guns, the Yaquis shot down the gunners.

"Growing bolder, they crept farther to the front—the rebels became disorganized, their men became mutinous—and at last, when they saw they would surely be taken, the leaders buried two tons of dynamite in the trenches by the bull-ring and set a time-fuse, to explode when the Yaquis arrived.

"The word spread through the town like wildfire—all the people, all the soldiers fled every which way to escape—and then, when the worst was expected to happen, the dynamite failed to explode and the Yaquis rushed the trenches at sundown."

"Did those Yaquis know about the dynamite?" inquired Bud.

"Know?" repeated Don Juan, waving the thought away; "not a word! Their commanders kept it from them, even after they discovered the mine. And now the Indians are making boasts; they are drunk with the thought of their valor and claim that the rebels fled from them alone.

"The roadmaster came into town this morning on a velocipede and said that the Yaquis are insufferable, thinking that it was their renown as fighters and not the news of the dynamite that drove all the soldiers from town.

"However, Agua Negra is once more in the hands of the government; the track is clear and most of the bridges repaired; so why quarrel with the Yaquis? While they are, of course, nothing but Indians, they serve their purpose in battle."

"Well, I guess yes!" responded Bud warmly. "Serve their purpose, eh? Where were these Mexican soldiers and them Spanish officers when the Yaquis were taking the town? And that was just like a dog-goned Mexican—setting that time-fuse and then not having it go off. More'n likely the poor yap that fired it was so scairt he couldn't hold a match—probably never lit it, jest dropped the match and run. They're a bum bunch, if you want to know what I think. I'd rather have a Yaqui than a hundred of 'em!"

"A hundred of whom?" inquired a cool voice behind him, and looking up Hooker saw the beautiful Gracia gazing out at him through the screen door.

"A hundred Mexicans!" he repeated, and Gracia murmured "Oh!" and was gone.

"Miss Aragon is very loyal to her country," observed Don Juan, but Hooker only grunted.

Somehow, since those four Mexicans had come to his camp, he had soured on everything south of the line; and even the charming Gracia could not make him take back his words. If she had intended the remark as a challenge—a subtle invitation to follow her and defend his faith—she failed for once of her purpose, for if there was any particular man in Mexico that Bud hated more than another it was her false-hearted father.

Hooker had, in fact, thought more seriously of making her a half-orphan than of winning her good-will, and he lingered about the hotel, not to make love to the daughter, but to strike terror to Aragon.

The company being good, and a train being expected soon, Bud stayed over another day. In the morning, when he came down for breakfast, he found that Aragon had fled before him. With his wife, daughter, and retinue, he had moved suddenly back to his home. Hooker grinned when Don Juan told him the news.

"Well, why not?" he asked, chuckling maliciously. "Here it's the middle of the rainy season and the war going on all summer and nary a rebel in sight. Where's that big fight you was telling about—the battle of Fortuna? You've made a regular fortune out of these refugees, Brachamonte, but I fail to see the enemy."

"Ah, you may laugh," shrugged the hotel-keeper, "but wait! The time will come. The rebels are lost now—some day,

when you least expect it, they will come upon us and then, believe me, my guests will be glad they are here. What is a few weeks' bill compared to being held for ransom? Look at that rich Señor Luna who was here for a time in the spring. Against my advice he hurried home and now he is paying the price. Ten thousand pesos it cost to save his wife and family, and for himself and son his friends advanced ten thousand more. I make no evil prophecies, but it would be better for our friend if he stayed on at my poor hotel."

"Whose friend?" inquired Bud bluffly, but Don Juan struck him upon the back with elephantine playfulness and hurried off to his duties.

As for Hooker, he tarried in town until he got his mail and a copy of the Sunday paper and then, well satisfied that the times were quiet and wars a thing of the past, he ambled back to the Eagle Tail and settled down for a rest.

Flat on his back by the doorway he lay on his bed and smoked, reading his way through the lurid supplement and watching the trail with one eye. Since the fight with Aragon's Mexicans all his apprehensions had left him. He had written briefly to Phil and Kruger, and now he was holding the fort.

It had been a close shave, but he had escaped the cowardly assassins and had Aragon in his power. Not by any force of law, but by the force of fear and the gnawing weakness of Aragon's own evil conscience.

Aragon was afraid of what he had done, but it was the suspense which rendered him so pitiable. On a day he had sent four armed Mexicans to kill this Texan—not one had returned and the Texan regarded him sneeringly. This it was that broke the Spaniard's will, for he knew not what to think. But as for Bud, he lay on his back by the doorway and laughed at the funny page.

As he sprawled there at his reading, Amigo came in from the hills, and he, too, was content to relax. Gravely scanning the colored sheet, his dark face lighted up.

It was all very peaceful and pleasant, but it was not destined to last.

XXI

On the morning after they had laughed at the comic paper and decided that all the

world was fair, Hooker and Amigo were squatting by the fire and eating a man's-size breakfast.

The creek, swollen by yesterday's torrential rain, had settled to a rivulet. The wind had not risen and the sun was just over the hill when, with a rush and a scramble, Amigo threw down his cup and was off in a flash for the rocks.

A moment later two men rode down the cañon, and then two more, and two more. It was a column of men, all armed with rifles, and they cast envious eyes at Copper Bottom as they halted before the camp. As for Bud, he saluted gravely, for he knew them for what they were.

These were the lost forces of Bernardo Bravo and Salazar, Rojas, and the other bandit chiefs, and they marched, as he well knew, upon Fortuna. They marched quietly, and the great whistle had not blown.

It would make a rich prize, Fortuna, if they could take it by surprise! The ransom for the Spanish *haciendados* alone would amount to thousands of dollars, and the mine-owners could afford to pay anything in order to save their works.

A box of dynamite under the giant concentrator and the money would be produced at once, and yet the scoundrels halted at a one-man camp to steal a single horse.

A flicker of scorn passed over Hooker's face as the leader came dashing up, but the Texan greeted him with a slow smile.

"*Buenos días*, general!" he said; "you have many men."

"Enough!" observed the "general" hurriedly, "but some in the rear are on foot. As I suppose you are in sympathy with our great cause, I will ask you for that horse. Of course, I will give you a receipt."

He fetched out a blank-book as he spoke and motioned to a ragged beggar at his heels. Bud checked the man's rush with a look.

"One moment!" he said, and as the soldier turned back his general glanced up sharply.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Only this, Señor General," answered Bud. "You are welcome to anything I have—food, blankets, money—but I cannot give you that horse."

"But, *señor!*" protested the general, regarding him with arrogant pig eyes that

glinted wickedly, "this poor soldier's feet are sore. Surely you would not make him walk. Only name your price and I will give you a receipt for him, but my man must have the horse."

There was a pause and men began to dismount and move in closer. At a word from their commander any one of them would draw and kill him, as Hooker very well knew, but his love for Copper Bottom made him obdurate.

"If the man is lame," he said, "I will give him another horse—but he cannot have this sorrel."

He stepped quickly over to the corral and turned with his back to the gate, while the commander spat out orders in Spanish and armed men came running.

"Señor," he said, advancing brusely upon the defiant Hooker, "I must trouble you for that pistol."

"No, señor!" answered the cowboy, keeping his hand upon his gun, "not to you nor no man—and I'll never give it up to a Mexican!"

"Carái!" exclaimed the officer impatiently, "you are an *Americano*—no?"

"Not only that," rumbled Bud, drawing himself up in his pride, "I am a *Tejano* also, and if any man touches that horse I'll kill him!"

His voice trembled with anger, but his hand was steady and the Mexicans did not deceive themselves.

"Ha, *uno Tejano*!" murmured the men who stood about, and one or two who had started to climb the fence thought better of it and dropped back to the ground.

Bud knew the fate of several men who had proclaimed themselves Americans to the *insurrectos*—boastfully done, it was said to be the quickest way there was of drawing a Mexican bullet. But to be a Texan was different—somehow the very name suggested trouble to their minds and an Alamo fight to the death. Hooker saw that he had made an impression, and he was not slow to follow it up.

"If you need a horse," he said to the general, "let your man go up that arroyo and he will find one hobbled on the flat. Then give me your receipt for two hundred dollars gold and I will contribute a saddle."

It was a reasonable concession, under the circumstances, and, best of all, it saved the general's face. The hideous frown with which he had regarded the American changed suddenly to a look of pompous

pride. He jerked an imperious head at his ragged retainer and drew forth his receipt-book with a flourish.

While he waited for the horse to appear he turned upon his snooping men and drove them to their mounts with curses. Evidently it was no sinecure to command in the army of the liberation, and the veiled mutterings of his followers showed that they were little better than tigers in leash.

Mounted upon horses, mules, and even burros; armed with every conceivable weapon from a musket to standard repeating rifles, they were a tatterdemalion army, more fit for "treason, stratagems, and spoils" than the sterner duties of war.

Bud looked them over closely, well satisfied to have his back against a wall, and when the low-browed retainer came hurrying back with the horse he quickly took the worthless receipt and watched them on their way. Then, as the last camp-follower disappeared, he ran for his saddle and rifle and within a minute he was mounted and away.

There were rebels below him—very likely there were more to come—the only safe place for Copper Bottom was over the hills at Fortuna. Without stopping for path or trail he headed straight northwest over the ridges, riding as the cowboys do when they rake the range for cattle. Hardly had he topped the first high crest when he came in sight of Amigo, loaded down with his cartridge-belts and carrying his heavy Mauser.

In a long, shambling trot the Yaqui was drifting along the hillside with the free grace of a wild creature, and when Hooker pulled down his horse to keep pace with him he laughed and motioned him on. Taking the lead, he loped on over hog-back and barranca, picking out the best trail by instinct and setting such a pace that Bud was hard-pressed to keep up with him.

He had heard it said that in the Yaqui country no white man, no matter how well he was mounted, could outdistance the Indians on foot, and now he knew it was true. But why this killing haste on the part of Amigo? He had neither friends nor kin in town; why, then, should he run so fast to warn them of the enemy?

They racked on, up one hill and down another, while the *insurrectos* followed the cañon that swung to the south, and finally,

in a last scramble, they mounted a rocky ridge and looked down upon Old Fortuna.

Already the hard-driven peons were out in the fields at work and smoke was rising from the *mescal* still. Aragon was busy, but his labors would be worse than wasted if the red-flags took him prisoner. As Bud breathed his horse he hesitated whether to ride back and warn him or press on and notify Fortuna; but even for that brief spell the Yaqui could not wait.

"*Adios*," he said, coming close and holding out his black hand; "I go this way!" And he pointed along the ridge.

"But why?" said Bud, still at a loss to account for his haste. Then, seeing the reticence in the Indian's eyes, he thrust out his hand in return.

"*Adios, amigo mio!*" he replied, and with a quick grip the Yaqui was gone.

With that same deceptive speed he shambled through the bushes, still lugging the heavy rifle and making for higher ground. Bud knew he had some purpose—he even had a sneaking idea that it was to take pot-shots at Captain del Rey—but six months in Mexico had made him careless, and he half hoped the Yaqui would win.

The *capitan* had it coming to him for his brutality, but with Aragon it was different—Aragon had a wife and daughter—and, with the memory of Gracia in his mind, Bud sent his horse plunging down the ridge to warn them before it was too late.

There were some brush fences to be jumped, but Copper Bottom took them flying, and as they cut into the river trail he made the mud-puddles splash. Across the fields to the south Bud could see the peons running for cover—the *insurrectos* must be in sight beyond the hills.

He was going south, they were moving west, but it was five miles north again to the town. Speed was what was needed and Copper Bottom gave his best. They dashed into Fortuna like a whirlwind, and Hooker raised his voice in a high yell.

"*Insurrectos!*" he shouted. "*Ladrones! Pr-onto á Fortuna!*"

There was a hush, a moment's silence, and then heads appeared from every window and women ran screaming with the news. Aragon came rushing from the store and confronted him angrily; then, reading conviction in his tones, he called for horses and ran frantically into the house.

A shrill screech came from the hillside, where a serving-woman had scampered to view the valley, and, as she pointed her finger and screamed, mothers laid hold of their little ones and started up the valley on foot.

Still the men ran about in the horse-pen and Aragon adjured his womenfolk in the house. Burning with impatience, Bud spurred his way to the corral where they were fumbling with reata and rigging and dropped a rope on the first horse he saw. Then he snatched a side-saddle from a trembling peon and slapped it on the brute's back. Grabbing up the bridle, he led the horse back to the house and bridled it while he shouted for haste.

Still the women tarried, and the sound of galloping came from the south. Then, as all seemed lost, the Mexicans came bumping out from the stable with the family coach, Aragon and his wife leaped in, and Gracia, neatly attired in a riding-skirt, came tripping down the steps.

Even in such times as these she seemed to realize her first duty to herself, and Hooker had to gaze for a moment before he helped her up. She offered her foot and vaulted lightly into the saddle; the coach went pounding on ahead; and as the servants scattered before her she galloped off at the side of Bud.

Behind them the rumble of distant hoofs rose up like the roaring of waters, and the shrieks of fleeing women echoed from the roadside, but once safely in the cañon their lead was never lessened and, with coach-horses galloping and postilions lashing from both sides, the whole cavalcade swept into the plaza while the town of Fortuna went mad.

Already the great whistle was blowing hoarsely, its deep reverberations making the air tremble as if with fear. Americans were running back and forth, distributing arms and rushing their women to cover; Don Juan, his chin quivering with excitement, was imploring all comers to be calm; and the Aragons, coming flying up to the door, added the last touch to the panic.

They with their own eyes had seen the rebels; they were riding in from the south! Other men, equally excited, swore they were coming from the north, and a disorderly body of Sonoran miners, armed as if by magic with guns which had long lain hidden, banked themselves about the store and office and clamored for more and more

cartridges. Then a rip of gun-fire echoed from across the cañon, and the miners made a rush to the attack.

The whistle, which had obscured all sound as a cloud obscures the light, stopped suddenly in its roar, and the crowd at the hotel became calm. The superintendent, a wiry, gray-haired little man with decision in every movement, came running from his fortlike house on the hill and ordered all the women to take shelter there and take their children with them.

So, while the rifles rattled and stray bullets began to knock mud from the walls, they went straggling up the hill, rich and poor, patrician and peon, while the air was rent by the wails of the half-Indian Mexican women who held themselves as good as captured by the *revoltosos*, concerning whose scruples they entertained no illusions.

The women of the aristocracy bore themselves with more reserve, as befitting their birth and station, and the Americans who gathered about them with their protecting rifles pretended that all would be well; but in the minds of every one was that same terror which found expression in the peon wail and, while scattered rebels and newly armed miners exchanged volleys on both sides of the town, the non-combatant Americans sought out every woman and rushed her up to the big house. There, if worst came to worst, they could make a last stand, or save them by a ransom.

So, from the old woman who kept the candy stand in the plaza to the wives of the miners and the cherished womenfolk of the landowners, they were all crowded inside the broad halls of the big house; and seventy odd Americans, armed with company rifles, paced nervously along the broad verandas or punched loopholes in the adobe walls that enclosed the summer-garden behind.

Along with the rest went Hooker and Gracia, and, though her mother beckoned and her father frowned sternly, the wilful daughter of the Aragoons did not offer to leave him as they scampered up the hill. In fact, she rode close beside him, spurring when he spurred and, finally, when the shower of stray bullets had passed, she led on around the house.

"Won't you help me take my horse inside the walls?" she asked. Bud followed after her, circling the fortress whose blank adobe walls gave shelter to the screaming

women, and she smiled upon him with the most engaging confidence.

"I know you will have to go soon," she said, "and I suppose I've got to be shut in with those creatures, but we must be sure to save our horses. Some bullets might hit them, you know, and then we could not run away!"

"You remember your promise!" she reminded, as Bud gazed at her in astonishment. "Ah, yes, I knew you did—otherwise you would not have picked such a good horse for me. This roan is my father's best riding-horse. You must put yours inside the wall with him, and when the time is right we will get them and ride for the line."

"What?" cried Hooker incredulously, "with the country full of rebels? They're liable to take the town in half an hour!"

"No, indeed they will not!" responded Gracia with spirit. "You do not understand the spirit of us Sonorans! Can't you see how the firing has slackened? The miners have driven your rebels back already, and they will do more—they will follow them up and kill them! Then, when the rebels are in flight and Del Rey and his *rurales* are away, that will be a good time for us to slip off and make our dash for the line!"

"Nothing doing!" announced Hooker, as he dismounted at the corral. "You don't know what you're talking about! But I will leave my horse here," he added; "I sure don't want *him* to get hurt."

"But you promised!" protested Gracia weakly.

"Promised nothing!" retorted Bud ungraciously. "I promised to take care of you, didn't I? Well, what's the use of talking, then? You better stay right here, where you're safe. Come on, let's go to the house!"

"No!" cried Gracia, her dark eyes turning misty with imminent tears. "Oh, Mr. Hooker!" she burst out, "didn't I keep them all waiting while I put on this riding-skirt? I thought you had come to take me away! What do I care to be safe? I want to be free! I want to run away—and go across the line to dear Phil!" she faltered. Then she looked up at him sharply and her voice took on an accusing tone.

"Aha!" she said, as if making some expected discovery, "so that is it! I thought perhaps you were afraid!"

"What?" demanded Bud, put suddenly upon the defensive.

"I might have known it," soliloquized Gracia with conviction. "You are jealous of dear Phil!"

"Who? Me?" cried Hooker, smiling down at her grimly. "Well, let it go at that," he said, as she regarded him with an arch smile. "I'd certainly be a fool to take all those chances for nothing. Let him steal his own girl—that's what I say!"

"Now that, Mr. Hooker," burst out Gracia in a passion, "is very unkind—and rude! Am I a woman of the town, to be stolen by one man or another? Am I—"

"That's what you would be," put in Bud, with brutal directness, "if these rebels got hold of you. No, ma'am, I wouldn't take you out of this town for a hundred thousand dollars. You don't know what you're talking about, that's all! Wait till the fighting is over—gee! Did you hear that? Come on, let's get into the house!"

He ducked suddenly as a bullet went *spang* against the corrugated iron roof above them and, seizing her by the hand, he half dragged her through a side door and into the summer garden.

Here a sudden outcry of women's voices assailed their ears like a rush of wind and they beheld peon mothers running to and fro with their screaming children clasped to their breasts or dragging at their skirts. A few helpless men were trying to keep them quiet, but as the bullets began to thud against the adobe walls the garden became a bedlam.

Gracia stood and surveyed the scene for a moment, ignoring the hulking Bud with disdainful eyes. Then she snatched her hand indignantly away and ran to pick up a child. That was all, but Hooker knew what she thought of him.

He passed through the house, hoping to discover where she had gone, but all he heard was her commanding voice as she silenced the wailing women, and, feeling somehow very much out of place, he stepped forth into the open.

After all, for a man of his build, the open was best. Let the white-handed boys stay with the ladies—they understood their ways.

XXII

THE superintendent's house stood on a low bench above the town, looking out over

all the valley, but protected by a high hill behind, upon the summit of which was placed a mammoth black water-tank.

In its architecture the *casa grande* was an exact replica of a hot-country *hacienda*, a flat-roofed, one-storied square of adobe bricks, whitewashed to keep off the sun and presenting on three sides nothing but the dead walls of house and garden, with dense trees planted near for shade. Along the front was a long arcade, the *corredor*, graced by a series of massive arches which let in the light and air. Inside were low chambers and long passages; and, behind, the *patio* and garden of orange and fig trees.

Built for a sumptuous dwelling, it became in a moment a fort and, with men on the high hill by the tank, it was practically impregnable to direct assault.

As Hooker stepped out onto the covered porch with his saddle-gun in his hand he became simply one more of a band of excited Americans, all armed and ready to defend the house to the last. Some were pacing back and forth in the *corredor*, others were hurrying up from the Mexican quarters with a last belated handful of women, but the major portion were out on the open bench, either gazing north and south at the scenes of the distant firing or engaging in a curio-mad scramble for any spent bullet that struck.

The fighting, such as there was, was mostly up the cañon, where a large party of Sonoran miners had rushed in pursuit of the rebels. The firing down the cañon in the direction of Old Fortuna had died away to nothing, and for the moment it seemed as if the futile charge and retreat was the beginning and the end of the battle.

A party of rebels had penetrated clear into the town, but it was apparently more by accident than intention, and they had been quick to beat a retreat. As for the main command of the *insurrectos*, they were reported at Chular, six miles up the railroad, where they had surrounded and taken a small mining camp and captured a train at the summit.

The column to the south—the one which Hooker had encountered—had taken to the high hills west of the town, and, along the sky-line of the buttlike summits they could now be seen in scattered bands making their way to the north.

The defenders of Fortuna consisted of a rag-tag garrison of twenty Federals and

the hot-headed, charging miners. But apparently that was a combination hard to beat, for, while the Federals entrenched themselves behind the black tank on the hill and prepared to protect the town, the Sonorans in shouting masses drove everything before them and marched on to attack Chular.

But in this they made a mistake, for the rebel scouts, seeing the great body of defenders pressing on up the narrow cañon, rode back and informed the tricky Bernardo Bravo. He would be a poor general indeed who could not see the opening that was offered and, while the valiant Sonorans pursued the rebel cavalry up the pass, Bernardo Bravo sent the half of his thousand men to cut off their retreat from behind.

Along the broad top of the mountain above they came scampering by tens and twenties, closing in with a vastly superior force upon the now defenseless town. In the depths of the cañon below the miners were still chasing the elusive cavalry, their firing becoming faint as they clambered on toward the summit and the rebel headquarters at Chular.

They had, in fact, been handled like children, and the Americans joined in contemptuous curses of their mistaken bravery as they beheld in what straits it had left them.

Forbidden by the superintendent to participate in the combat, yet having in their care the women of the camp, they were compelled to stand passively aside while rebels by the hundred came charging down the ridges. Only in the last resort, and when all diplomacy and Federal defense had failed, would they be allowed to so much as cock a rifle. And yet—well, twenty determined Americans might easily turn back this charge.

Taking advantage of his Mexican citizenship, Hooker was already on the run for the trenches when the superintendent stopped him with a look.

"Let the Mexicans fight it out," he said. "They might resent it if you took sides, and that would make it bad for us. Just wait a while—you never can tell what will happen. Perhaps the *rurales* and Federals will stand them off."

"What, that little bunch?" demanded Bud, pointing scornfully at the handful of defenders who were cowering behind their rock-piles. "Why half of them *pelónes*

don't know what a gun was made for, and the *rurales*—"

"Well, the rebels are the same," suggested the superintendent pacifically. "Let them fight it out—we need every American we can get, so just forget about being a Mexican."

"All right," agreed Bud, as he yielded reluctantly to reason. "It ain't because I'm a Mexican citizen—I just want to stop that rush."

He walked back to the house, juggling his useless gun and keeping his eye on the distant ridges. And then, in a chorus of defiant yells, the men in the Federal trenches began to shoot.

In an air-line the distance was something over a mile, but at the first scattering volley the rebels halted and fired a volley in return. With a vicious *spang* a few stray bullets smashed against the reverberating steel tank, but no one was hurt, and the defenders, drunk with valor, began to shoot and yell like mad.

The bullets of the rebels, fired at random, struck up dust-jets in every direction, and from the lower part of the town came the shouting of the non-combatant Mexicans as they ran here and there for shelter. But by the trenches, and in the rear of the black tank, the great crowd of onlookers persisted, ducking as each successive bullet hit the tank and shouting encouragement as the defenders emptied their rifles and reloaded with clip after clip.

The rifles rattled a continuous volley; spent bullets leaped like locusts across the flat; men ran to and fro, now crouching behind the tank, now stepping boldly into the open; and the defiant shouts of the defenders almost drowned the wails of the women. Except for one thing it was a battle—there was nobody hurt.

For the first half-hour the Americans stayed prudently under cover, busying themselves at the suggestion of a few American women in providing a first-aid hospital on the sheltered porch. Then, as no wounded came to fill it and the rebels delayed their charge, one man after another climbed up to the trenches, ostensibly to bring down the injured.

As soldiers and bystanders reported no one hit, and the bullets flew harmlessly past, their solicitude turned rapidly to disgust and then to scorn. Strange as it may seem, they were disappointed at the results, and their remarks were derogatory as they

commented on the bravery of *pelónes* and Mexicans in general.

From a dread of imminent attack, of charging rebels and retreating defenders, and a fight to the death by the house, they came suddenly to a desire for blood and battle, for dead men and the cries of the wounded; and all fear of the *insurrectos* left them.

"Come away, boys," grunted the burly roadmaster, who up to then had led in the work; "we wasted our time on that hospital—there'll be no wounded. Let's take ourselves back to the house and have a quiet smoke."

"Right you are, Ed," agreed the master mechanic, as he turned upon his heel in disgust. "This ain't war—they Mexicans think they're working for a moving-picture show!"

"I bet you I can go up on that ridge," announced Hooker, "and clean out the whole bunch with my six-shooter before you could bat your eye."

But the superintendent was not so sure.

"Never mind, boys," he said. "We're worth a lot of ransom money to those rebels and they won't give up so quick. And look at this now—my miners coming back! Those are the boys that will fight! Wait till Chico and Ramon Mendoza get after them!"

He pointed as he spoke to a straggling band of Sonorans, led by the much-vaunted Mendoza brothers, as they hurried to save the town, and a cheer went up from the trenches as the Federals beheld reinforcements. But a change had come over the fire-eating miners, and they brought other rebels in their wake.

As they trudged wearily into town and sought shelter among the houses a great body of men appeared on the opposite ridge, firing down at them as they retreated. The battle rapidly turned into a long-distance shooting contest, with the rebels on the ridges and the defenders in the valley, and finally, as the day wore on and a thunder-storm came up, it died out altogether and the rebels turned back to their camp.

Except for one lone Federal who had shot himself by accident there was not a single defender hurt, and if the enemy had suffered losses it was only by some such chance. But when the Sonoran patriots, holding up their empty belts, came clamoring for ammunition, the men by the big

house took in the real catastrophe of the battle.

Seventeen thousand rounds of the precious thirty-thirties had been delivered to the excited miners and now, except for what few the Americans had saved, there was not a cartridge in camp. Very soberly the superintendent assured the leaders that he had no more; they pointed at the full belts of the American guard and demanded them as their right; and when the Americans refused to yield they flew into a rage and threatened.

All in all, it was a pitiful exhibition of hot-headedness and imbecility, and only the firmness of the superintendent prevented a real spilling of blood. The Mexicans retired in a huff and broke into the *cantina*, and as the night came on the valley echoed to their drunken shoutings.

Such was war as the Sonorans conceived it. When Hooker, standing his guard in the *corredor*, encountered Gracia Aragon on her evening walk, he could scarcely conceal a grin.

"What are you laughing at, Señor Hooker?" she demanded with asperity. "Is it so pleasant, with a houseful of frightened women and screaming children, that you should make fun of our plight?"

"No, indeed," apologized Bud; "nothing like that. Sure must be bad in there—I stay outside myself. But I reckon it'll soon be over with. The Mexicans here in town have shot off all their ammunition and I reckon the rebels have done the same. Like as not they'll all be gone tomorrow, and then you can go back home."

"Oh, thank you for thinking about me!" she returned with a scornful curl of the lip. "But if all men were as open as you, Mr. Hooker, we women would never need to ask a question. This morning you told me I did not know what I was talking about—now I presume you are thinking what cowards the Mexicans are!"

"Oh, I know! You need not deny it! You are nothing but a great big—*Tejano*! Yes, I was going to say 'brute,' but you are a friend of dear Phil's, and so I will hold my tongue. If it wasn't for that, I'd—" She paused, leaving him to guess.

"Oh, I do wish he were here," she breathed, leaning wearily against the white pillar of an arch and gazing down through the long arcade.

"It was so close in there," she continued, "I could not stand it a minute longer."

These Indian women, you know—they weep and moan all the time. And the children—I am so sorry for them. I cannot go now, because they need me; but to-morrow—if Phil were here—I would leave and ride for the line.

"Have you seen Del Rey to-day? No? Then all the better—he must be policing the town. It is only of him I am afraid. These rebels are nothing—I agree with you! No! I am not angry with you at all now! But to-morrow, just at dusk, when all is still as it is at this time; then, if Phil were here, I would mount my brave horse and ride out by the western pass."

She ended rather inconclusively, letting her voice trail off wistfully as she waited for him to speak, but something within moved Hooker to hold his peace, and he looked out over the town without commenting on her plans. It was evident to him that she was determined to enlist his sympathy and involve him in her wild plot, and each time the conversation veered in that direction he took refuge in a stubborn silence.

"What are you thinking, Mr. Hooker?" she asked at last, as he gazed into the dusk. "Sometimes I scold you and sometimes I try to please you, but I never know what you think! I did not mean that when I said I could read your thoughts—you are so different from poor, dear Phil!"

"M-m-m," mumbled Bud, shifting his feet, and his face turned a little grim.

"Aha!" she cried with ill-concealed satisfaction, "you do not like me to call him that, do you? 'Poor, dear Phil,'—like that! But do you know why I do it? It is to punish you for never coming near me—when I signed to you—when I waited for you—long ago! Ah, you were so cruel! I wanted to know you—you were a cow-boy, and I thought you were brave enough to defend me—but you always rode right by. Yes, that was it—but Phil was different! He came when I sent for him; he sang songs to me at night; he took my part against Manuel del Rey; and now—"

"Yes!" commented Bud brusksly, with his mind on "dear Phil's" finish, and she turned to peer into his face.

"So that is it!" she said. "You do not trust me. You think that I am not your friend—that I will serve you as he was served. Is that what you are thinking?"

"Something like that," admitted Hooker,

leaning lazily against the mud wall. "Only I reckon I don't think just the way you do."

"Why? How do I think?" she demanded eagerly.

"Well, you think awful fast," answered Hooker slowly. "And you don't always think the same, seems like. I'm kind of quiet myself, and I don't like—well, I wouldn't say that, but you don't always mean what you say."

"Oh!" breathed Gracia, and then, after a pause, she came nearer and leaned against the low wall beside him.

"If I would speak from my heart," she asked, "if I would talk plain, as you Americans do, would you like me better then? Would you talk to me instead of standing silent? Listen, Bud—for that is your name—I want you to be my friend the way you were a friend to Phil. I know what you did for him, and how you bore with his love-madness—and that was my fault, too. But partly it was also your fault, for you made me angry by not coming."

"Yes, I will be honest now—it was you that I wanted to know at first, but you would not come, and now I am promised to Phil. He was brave when you were careful, and my heart went out to him. You know how it is with us Mexicans—we do not love by reason. We love like children—suddenly—from the heart! And now all I wish in life is to run away to Phil. But every time I speak of it you shut your jaws or tell me I am a fool."

"Ump-um," protested Bud, turning stubborn again. "I tell you you don't know what you're talking about. These rebels don't amount to nothing around the town, but on a trail they're awful. They shoot from behind rocks and all that, and a woman ain't noways safe. You must know what they're like—these old women don't think about nothing else—so what's the use of talking! And besides," he added grimly, "I've had some trouble with your old man and don't want to have any more."

"What trouble have you had?" she demanded promptly, but Hooker would not answer in words. He only shrugged his shoulders and turned away, crumpling his hat in his hand.

"But no!" she cried as she sensed the meaning of his concealment, "you must tell me! I want to know. Was it over

your mine? Then you must not blame me, for he never has told me a word!"

"No?" inquired Bud, rousing suddenly at the memory of his wrongs. "Then maybe you will tell me how he got *this*"—he fetched a worn piece of ore from his pocket—"when my pardner gave it to you! It was right there I lost my pardner—and he was a good kid, too—and all because of that rock. Here, take a look at it—I took that away from your father!"

"Then he stole it from me!" flashed back Gracia as she gazed at the specimen. "Oh, have you thought all the time that I betrayed Phil? But didn't I tell you—didn't I tell you at the hotel, when you promised to be my friend? Ah, I see that you are a hard man, Mr. Hooker—quick to suspect, slow to forget—and yet I told you before! But listen, and I will tell you again. I remember well when dear Phil showed me this rock—he was so happy because he had found the gold! And just to make it lucky he let me hold it while we were talking through a hole in the wall. Then my father saw me and started to come near—I could not hand it back without betraying Phil—and in the night, when I was asleep, some one took it from under my pillow. That is the truth, and I will ask you to believe me; and if you have other things against me you must say what they are and see if I cannot explain.

"No!" she ran on, her voice vibrant with the memory of past quarrels, "I have nothing to do with my father! He does not love me, but tries to make me marry first one man and then another. But I am an American girl now, at heart—I do not want to sell myself; I want to marry for love! Can you understand that? Yes? No? Then why do you look away? Have you something that you hold against me? Ah, you shake your head—but you will not speak to me? When I was at school in Los Angeles I saw the cowboys in the west show, and they were different—they were not afraid of any danger, but they would talk, too. I have always wanted to know you, but you will not let me—I thought you were brave—like those cowboys."

She paused to make him speak, but Hooker was tongue-tied. There was something about the way she talked that pulled him over, that made him want to do what she said, and yet some secret, hidden voice was always crying: "Beware!" He was convinced now that she had never been a

party to treachery; no, nor even wished him ill.

She was very beautiful, too, in the twilight, and when she drew nearer he moved away, for he was afraid she would sway him from his purpose. But now she was waiting for some answer—some word from him, though the question had never been asked. And yet he knew what it was.

She wanted him to steal away with her in the evening and ride for the border—and Phil. That was what she always wanted, no matter what she said, and now she was calling him a coward.

"Sure them bronco-riders are brave," he said in vague defense; "but there's a difference between being brave and foolish. And a man might be brave for himself and yet be afraid for other people."

"How do you mean?" she asked.

"Well," he said, "I might be willing to go out and fight a thousand of them *insurrectos* with one hand, and at the same time be afraid to take you along. Or I might—"

"Oh, then you *will* go, won't you?" she cried, clasping him by the hand. "You will, won't you? I'm not afraid!"

"No," answered Bud, drawing his hand away, "that's just what I won't do! And I'll tell you why. That country up there is full of rebels—the lowest kind there are. It just takes one shot to lay me out or cripple one of our horses. Then I'd have to make a fight for it—but what would happen to you?"

"I'd fight, too!" spoke up Gracia resolutely. "I'm not afraid."

"No," grumbled Bud, "you don't know them rebels. You've been shut up in a house all the time—if you'd been through what I have in the last six months you'd understand what I mean."

"If Phil were here, *he'd* take me!" countered Gracia, and then Bud lost his head.

"Yes," he burst out, "that's jest what's the matter with the crazy fool! That's jest why he's up across the line now a hol-lering for me to save his girl! He's brave, is he? Well, why don't he come down, then, and save you himself? Because he's afraid to! He's afraid of getting shot or going up against Manuel del Rey. By grab, it makes me tired the way you people talk! If he'd done what I told him to in the first place he wouldn't have got into this jack-pot!"

"Oh my!" exclaimed Gracia, aghast. "Why, what is the matter with you? And what did you tell him to do?"

"I told him to mind his own business," answered Hooker bluntly.

"And what did he say?"

"He said he'd try anything—once!"

Bud spat out the phrase vindictively, for his blood was up and his heart was full of bitterness.

"Oh dear!" faltered Gracia. "And so you do not think that Phil is brave?"

"He's brave to start things," sneered Bud, "but not to carry 'em through!"

For a moment Gracia huddled up against a pillar, her hand against her face, as if to ward off a blow. Then she lowered it slowly and moved reluctantly away.

"I must go now," she said, and Bud did not offer to stay her, for he saw what his unkindness had done.

"I am sorry!" she added pitifully, but he did not answer. There was nothing that he could say now.

In a moment of resentment, driven to exasperation by her taunts, he had forgotten his pledge to his pardner and come between him and his girl. That which he thought wild horses could not draw from him had flashed out in a fit of anger—and the damage was beyond amendment, for what he had said was the truth.

XXIII

THERE are two things, according to the saying, which cannot be recalled—the sped arrow and the spoken word. Whether spoken in anger or in jest, our winged thoughts will not come back to us and, where there is no balm for the wound we have caused, there is nothing to do but let it heal.

Bud Hooker was a man of few words, and slow to speak ill of any one, but some unfamiliar devil had loosened his tongue and he had told the worst about Phil. Certainly if a man were the bravest of the brave, certainly if he loved his girl more than life itself—he would not be content to hide above the line and pour out his soul on note-paper. But to tell it to the girl—that was an unpardonable sin!

Still, now that the damage was done, there was no use of vain repining, and after cursing himself whole-heartedly Bud turned in for the night. Other days were coming; there were favors he might do;

and perhaps, as the yesterdays went by, Gracia would forgive him for his plain speaking. Even to-morrow, if the rebels came back for more, he might square himself in action and prove that he was not a coward. A coward!

It had been a long time since any one had used that word to him, but after the way he had knifed "dear Phil" he had to admit he was it. But "dear Phil"! It was that which had set him off.

If she knew how many other girls—but Bud put a sudden quietus on that particular line of thought. As long as the world stood and Gracia was in his sight he swore never to speak ill of De Lancey again, and then he went to sleep.

The men who guarded the *casa grande* slept uneasily on the porch, lying down like dogs on empty sugar-sacks that the women might not lack bedding inside. Even at that they were better off, for the house was close and feverish, with the crying of babies and the babbling of dreamers, and mothers moving to and fro.

It was a hectic night, but Bud slept it out, and at dawn, after the custom of his kind, he arose and stamped on his boots. The moist coolness of the morning brought the odor of wet greasewood and tropic blossoms to his nostrils as he stepped out to speak with the guards, and as he stood there waiting for the full daylight the master mechanic joined him.

He was a full-bodied, round-headed little man with determined views on life, and he began the day, as usual, with his private opinion of Mexicans. They were the same uncomplimentary remarks to which he had given voice on the day before, for the rebels had captured one of his engines and he knew it would come to some harm.

"A fine bunch of *hombres*, yes," he ended, "and may the devil fly away with them! They took No. 9 at the summit yesterday and I've been listening ever since. Her pans are all burned out and we've been feeding her bran like a cow to keep her from leaking steam. If some ignorant Mex gets hold of her you'll hear a big noise—and that'll be the last of No. 9—her boiler will burst like a wet bag.

"If I was running this road there'd be no more bran—not since what I saw over at Aguas Calientes on the Central. One of those bum, renegade engine-drivers had burned out No. 743, but the rebels had

ditched four of our best and we had to send her out. Day after day the boys had been feeding her bran until she smelled like a distillery. The mash was oozing out of her as Ben Tyrrell pulled up to the station, and a friend of his that had come down from the north took one sniff and swung up into the cab.

"Ben came down at the word he whispered—for they'd two of 'em blowed up in the north—and they sent out another man. Hadn't got up the hill when the engine exploded and blew the poor devil to hell! I asked Tyrrell what his friend had told him, but he kept it to himself until he could get his time. It's the fumes, boy—they blow up like brandy—and old No. 9 is sour!

"She'll likely blow up, too. But how can we fix her with these ignorant Mexican mechanics? You should have been over at Aguas the day they fired the Americans.

"No more *Americanos*," says Madero, 'let 'em all out and hire Mexicans! The national railroads of Mexico must not be in the hands of foreigners.'

"So they fired us all in a day and put a Mexican wood-passer up in the cab of old No. 313. He started to pull a string of empties down the track, threw on the air by mistake, and stopped her on a dead-center. Pulled out the throttle and she wouldn't go, so he gave it up and quit.

"Called in the master mechanic then—a Mexican. He tinkered with her for an hour, right there on the track, until she went dead on their hands. Then they ran down a switch-engine and took back the cars and called on the roadmaster—a Mex. He cracked the nut—built a shoo-fly around No. 313 and they left her right there on the main track. Two days later an American hobo came by and he set down and laughed at 'em. Then he throws off the brakes, gives No. 313 a boost past the center with a crowbar, and runs her to the roundhouse by gravity. When we left Aguas on a hand-car that hobo was running the road.

"Ignorantest *hombres* in the world—these Mexicans. Shooting a gun or running an engine, it's all the same—they've got nothing above the eyebrows."

"That's right," agreed Bud, who had been craning his neck; "but what's that noise up the track?"

The master mechanic listened, and when his ears, dulled by the clangor of the shops,

caught the distant roar he turned and ran for the house.

"Git up, Ed!" he called to the roadmaster, "they're sending a wild car down the cañon—and she may be loaded with dynamite!"

"Dynamite or not," mumbled the grizzled roadmaster, as he roused up from his couch, "there's a derailer I put in up at kilometer seventy the first thing yesterday morning. That'll send her into the ditch!"

Nevertheless he listened intently, cocking his head to guess by the sound when it came to kilometer seventy.

"Now she strikes it!" he announced, as the rumble turned into a roar; but the roar grew louder, there was a clash as the trucks struck a curve, and then a great metal ore-car swung round the point, rode up high as it hit the reverse and, speeding by as if shot from a catapult, swept through the yard, smashed into a freight-car, and leaped, car and all, into the creek.

"They've sneaked my derailer!" said the roadmaster, starting on a run for the shops. "Who'll go with me to put in another one? Or we'll loosen a rail on the curve—that'll call for no more than a claw-bar and a wrench!"

"I'll go!" volunteered Bud and the man who stood guard, and as startled sleepers roused up on every side and ran toward the scene of the wreck they dashed down the hill together and threw a hand-car on the track.

Then, with what tools they could get together, and a spare derailer on the front, they pumped madly up the cañon, holding their breaths at every curve for fear of what they might see. If there was one runaway car there was another, for the rebels were beginning an attack.

Already on the ridges above them they could hear the crack of rifles, and a jet or two of dust made it evident that they were the mark. But with three strong men at the handles they made the hand-car jump. The low hills fled behind them. They rounded a point and the open track lay before them, with something—

"Jump!" shouted the roadmaster, and as they tumbled down the bank they heard a crash behind them and their hand-car was knocked into kindling-wood.

"Now up to the track!" the roadmaster panted, as the destroyer swept on down the line. "Find some tools—we'll take out a rail!"

With frantic eagerness he toiled up the fill and attacked a fish-plate, and Bud and the young guard searched the hillside for tools to help with the work. They fell to with sledge and claw-bar, tapping off nuts, jerking out spikes, and heaving to loosen the rail—and then once more that swift-moving something loomed up suddenly on the track.

"Up the hill!" commanded the roadmaster, and as they scrambled into a gulch a wild locomotive, belching smoke and steam like a fire-engine, went rushing past them, struck the loose rail, and leaped into the creek-bed. A moment later, as it crashed its way down to the water, there was an explosion that shook the hills. They crouched behind the cut bank, and the trees above them bowed suddenly to the slash of an iron hail.

"Dynamite!" cried the roadmaster, grinning triumphantly as he looked up after the shock; and when the fall of fragments had ceased, and they had fled as if by instinct from the place, they struck hands on their narrow escape. But back at the big house, with everybody giving thanks for their delivery from the powder-train, the master mechanic raised a single voice of protest.

"'Twas not dynamite!" he yelled. "Powder-train be damned! It was No. 9! She was sour as a distillery! She blew up, I tell ye—she blew up when she hit the creek!"

And even after a shower of bullets from the ridge had driven them all to cover he still rushed to those who would listen and clamored that it was the bran.

But there was scant time to hold a post-mortem on No. 9, for on the summit of a near-by ridge, and overlooking the black tank, the rebels had thrown up a wall in the night, and from the security of this shelter they were industriously shooting up the town.

The smash of the first wild car had been their signal for attack, and as the explosion threw the defenders into confusion they made a rush to take the tank. Here, as on the day before, was stationed the Federal garrison, a scant twenty or thirty men in charge of a boy lieutenant.

Being practically out of ammunition he did not stand on the order of his going, but as his *pelónes* pelted past the superintendent's house the reorganized miners, their belts stuffed with cartridges from their own

private stock, came charging up from the town and rallied them in the rear.

In a solid, shouting mass they swept up the hill together, dropped down behind the defenses, and checked the astounded rebels with a volley. Then there was another long-range battle, with every sign of war but the dead, until at last, as the firing slackened from lack of cartridges, a white flag showed on the ridge above, and the leaders went out for a parley.

Properly speaking, Del Rey was in command of the town, but neither the Federals nor the miners would recognize his authority and the leadership went by default. While they waited to hear the rebel demands the Americans took advantage of the truce to bring up hot food from the hotel, where Don Juan de Dios stood heroically at his post. Let bullets come and go, Don Juan kept his cooks about him, and to those who had doubted his valor his coffee was answer enough.

"W'y, my gracious, Mr. Hooker," he railed, as Bud refreshed himself between trips, "ain't you going to take any up to those women? Don't drink so much coffee now, but give it to the men who fight!"

"Ump-um," grunted Bud with a grin; "they got a skinful of *mescal* already! What they need is another car-load of ammunition to help 'em shoot their first rebel."

"I thought you said they wouldn't fight!" twitted Don Juan. "This is the battle of Fortuna that I was telling you about last week."

"Sure!" answered Bud, "and over there is the dead!"

He pointed to a riot of *mescal* bottles that marked the scene of the night's potations, and Don Juan gave him up as hopeless.

But, jest as he would, Bud saw that the situation was serious, for the foolhardy Sonorans had already emptied their cartridge-belts, and their guns were no better than clubs. Unless the rebels had been equally reckless with their ammunition they had the town at their mercy, and the first thing that they would demand would be the refugees in the big house.

The possession of the town; the arms of the defenders; food, clothing, and horses to ride—none of these would satisfy them. They would demand the rich Spanish landowners to be held for ransom, the women first of all. And of all those women huddled up in the *casa grande* not one would

bring a bigger ransom than Gracia Aragon.

Bud pondered upon the outcome as the emissaries wrangled on the hillside, and then he went back to the corral to make sure that his horse was safe. Copper Bottom, too, might be held for ransom. But, knowing the rebels as he did, Hooker foresaw a different fate, and rather than see him become the mount of some rebel chieftain he had determined, if the town surrendered, to make a dash.

Riding by night and hiding in the hills by day he could get to the border in two days. All he needed was a little jerked beef for the trip and he would be ready for anything.

So he hurried down to the hotel again and was just making a sack of food fast to his saddle when he heard a noise behind him and turned to face Aragon. For two days the once-haughty Don Cipriano had slunk about like a sick cat, but now he was headed for Gracia's big roan, and the look in his eyes betrayed his purpose.

"Where you going?" demanded Hooker in English, and at the gruff challenge the Spaniard stopped in his tracks. The old, hunted look came back into his eyes, he seemed to shrink before the stern gaze of the Texan, and, as the memory of his past misdeeds came over him, he turned as if to flee.

But there was a smile, an amused and tolerant smirk, about the American's mouth, and even for that look of understanding the harried *hacendado* seemed to thank him. He was broken now, thrown down from his pedestal of arrogance and conceit, and as Hooker did not offer to shoot him at sight he turned back to him like a lost dog that seeks but a kind word.

"Ah, *señor!*" he whined, "your pardon! What?" as he sighted the sack of meat—"you are going, too? Ah, my friend"—his eyes lighted up suddenly at the thought—"let me ride with you! I will pay you—yes, anything—but if Bernardo Bravo takes me he will hang me! He has sworn it!"

"Well, you got it coming to you!" answered Hooker heartlessly.

"But I will pay you well!" pleaded Aragon. "I will pay you—" He paused as if to consider what would tempt him and then suddenly he raised his head.

"What is it you wish above everything?" he questioned eagerly. "Your

title to the mine—no? *Bien!* Take me to the line—protect me from my enemies—and the papers are yours!"

"Have you got them with you?" inquired Hooker with businesslike directness.

"No, but I can get them!" cried Aragon, forgetful of everything but his desire to escape. "I can get them while you saddle my horse!"

"Where?" demanded Hooker craftily.

"From the *agente mineral!*" answered Aragon. "I have a great deal of influence with him, and—"

"*Bastante!*" exploded Bud in a voice which made Aragon jump. "Enough! If you can get them, I can! And we shall see, *Señor Aragon*, whether this pistol of mine will not give me some influence, too!"

"Then you will take them?" faltered Aragon as Hooker started to go. "You will take them and leave me for Bernardo Bravo to—"

"Listen, *señor!*" exclaimed Hooker, halting and advancing a threatening forefinger. "A man who can hire four men to do his dirty work needs no protection from me. You understand that—no? Then listen again. I am going to get those papers. If I hear a word from you I will send you to join your four men."

He touched his gun as he spoke and strode out into the open, where he beckoned the mineral agent from the crowd. A word in his ear and they went down the hill together, while Don Cipriano watched from above. Then, as they turned into the office, Aragon spat out a curse and went to seek Manuel del Rey.

XXIV

IN a land of class privilege and official graft it is often only in times of anarchy that a poor man can get his rights. For eight months Hooker had battled against the petty intrigue of Aragon and the *agente mineral*, and then suddenly, when the times turned to war and fear gripped at their hearts, he rose up and claimed his own, holding out his brawny right hand and demanding the concession to his mine.

In a day the whirligig of fortune had turned, and it was the fighting man who dominated. He spoke quietly and made no threats, but the look in his eye was enough, and the *agente* gave him his papers. Then he wrote out a receipt for the mining-tax and Bud stepped forth like a king.

With his papers inside his shirt and a belt of gold around his waist there was nothing left in Mexico for him. Once on his horse and headed for the line and he could laugh at them all. In Gadsden he could show title to Kruger, he could give answer for his trust and look the world in the eye.

Yes, he was a man now—but his work was not quite done. Up at the big house, with the screeching women around her, was Gracia Aragon, and he owed her something for his rough words. To pay her for that he would stay. Whatever she asked now he would grant it; and if worst came to worst he would take her with him and make good his promise to Phil. He had given his word and that was enough. Now he had only to wait.

The boy lieutenant, the brothers Mendoza, the superintendent, and Manuel del Rey, all were out on the hillside talking terms with Bernardo Bravo and his chiefs. With the rebels it was largely a bluff, since field-glasses had shown them to be short of cartridges; but they had over a thousand men massed along the ridges and, with courage, could easily take the town.

As for the Mendozas and their Sonoran miners, they were properly chagrined at their waste of ammunition and swore by Santa Guadalupe to fight it out with hand-grenades. Even as their leaders wrangled the Mexican powder-men were busily manufacturing bombs, and all the while the superintendent was glancing to the south, for swift couriers had been sent to Alvarez, the doughty Spanish *hacendado* of the hot country, to beg him to come to their relief.

Twice before Alvarez had met the rebels. The first time he spoke them well and they ran off all his horses. The second time he armed his Yaquis and Yaqui Mayo *rancheros* against them and drove them from his domain, inflicting a sanguinary punishment.

Since then he had been itching to engage them in a pitched battle, and when the word reached him he would come. Two hundred and forty Yaquis, all armed with repeating rifles, would follow at his back, and even with his boasted thousands Bernardo Bravo could hardly withstand their valor. So, while the rebels parleyed, demanding a ransom of millions and threatening to destroy the town, the defenders argued and reasoned with them,

hoping to kill the time until Alvarez should arrive.

In the open space in front of the house the refugees gathered in an anxious group, waiting for messengers from the front, and as Hooker walked among them he was aware of the malignant glances of Aragon. There were other glances as well, for he had won great favor with the ladies by ditching the powder-train, but none from Gracia or her mother.

From the beginning the Señora Aragon had treated him as a stranger, according to the code of her class, and Hooker had never attempted to intrude. But if Gracia still remembered that she was an American girl at heart, she forgot to show it to him. To all she was now the proud Spanish lady, thrown with the common people by the stress of circumstances, but far away from them in her thoughts.

The conference between the leaders dragged on and messengers came and went with the news—then, after hours of debate, it broke up suddenly in a row and the emissaries came back on the run. Even at that they narrowly escaped, for the rebels opened fire upon them from the ridges, and before they could get back to cover the dandy, Manuel del Rey, received a bullet-hole through the crown of his hat.

A grim smile flickered across Bud's face as he saw the damage it had wrought, for he knew that Amigo was in the hills—and a bullet shot down-hill goes high! Some trace of what was in his mind must have come to Del Rey as he halted in the shelter of the house, for he regarded the American sternly as Aragon spoke rapidly in his ear. But if they planned vengeance between them the times were not right, for a rattle of arms came from the lower town and the captain was up and away to marshal his men to the defense.

So far in the siege Del Rey had kept under cover, patrolling the streets and plaza and letting the volunteers fight, but now the war had shifted to his territory and his *rurales* were running like mad. For, matching treachery against deceit, the rebel leaders had sent men around to slip up near the town and at the first fusillade from the hillside they came charging up the creek.

Then it was that the ever-watchful *rurales* proved their worth. As the rebels appeared in the open they ran to the outlying houses and, fighting from the flat

roofs, checked the advance until the miners could come to their aid.

But in the confusion another party of rebels had rushed down the gulch from the west, and while the fight was going on in the lower town they found lodgment in a big adobe house. And now for the first time there was fighting in earnest—the house-to-house fighting that is seen at its worst in Mexico. While women screamed in the *casa grande* and the Americans paced to and fro on the hill, the boom of a dynamite bomb marked the beginning of hand-to-hand.

With a fearlessness born of long familiarity with explosives the Sonoran miners advanced valiantly with their hand-grenades—baking-powder cans filled with dynamite and studded with fulminating caps. Digging fiercely through wall after wall they approached unperceived by the enemy and the first bomb, flung from a roof, filled the adobe with wounded and dead.

A dense pall of yellowish smoke rose high above the town and, as bomb after bomb was exploded and the yells of the miners grew louder with each success, the stunned invaders broke from cover and rushed helter-skelter up the gulch. Then there was a prodigious shouting from the Sonorans and more than one triumphant grenadier swung his can of giant powder by the sling and let it smash against the hill in a terrific detonation.

In the big house all was confusion. Soon the cheers of the defenders heralded victory and, in spite of all efforts to restrain them, the wives of the miners rushed into the open to gaze upon the triumph of their menfolk.

On the hilltops the ineffective rebel riflemen rose up from behind their stone wall to stare, until suddenly they, too, were seized with a panic and ran to and fro like ants. Then, around the curve below the concentrator, a tall man came dashing up on a pure white horse, and behind him, charging as he charged, came the swarthy Yaquis of Alvarez, their new rifles gleaming in the sun.

Up along the hillside and after the fugitives they ran with vengeful eagerness, racing each other for the higher ground and the first shot at the rebels. First Alvarez on his white horse would be ahead and then, as they encountered rocks, the Yaquis would surge to the front. It was a

race and at the same time it was a rout, for, at the first glimpse of that oncoming body of warriors, the cowardly followers of Bernardo Bravo took to their heels and fled.

But over the rocks no Chihuahuan, no matter how scared, can hope to outdistance a Yaqui, and soon the *pop, pop* of rifles told the fate of the first luckless stragglers. For the Yaquis, after a hundred and sixty years of guerrilla warfare, never waste a shot; and as savage yells and the crash of a sudden volley drifted down from the rocky heights the men who had been besieged in Fortuna knew that death was abroad in the hills.

Fainter and fainter came the shots as the pursuit led on to the north and, as Hooker strained his eyes to follow a huge form that intuition told him was Amigo, he was wakened suddenly from his preoccupation by the touch of some unseen hand. He was in the open with people all about him—Spanish refugees, Americans, triumphant miners and their wives—but that touch made him forget the battle above him and instantly think of Gracia.

He turned and hurried back to the corral where Copper Bottom was kept, and there he found her waiting, with her roan all saddled, and she challenged him with her eyes. The sun gleamed from a pistol that she held in her hand, and again from her golden hair, but he saw only her eyes, so brave and daring, and the challenge to mount and ride.

Only for a moment did he stand before her gaze, and then he caught up his saddle and spoke soothingly to his horse. They rode out of the corral together, closing the gates behind them and passing down a gulch to the rear. All the town lay silent below them as they turned toward the western pass.

Soldiers, miners, and refugees, men, women, and children, every soul in Fortuna was on the hill to see the last of the battle. It had been a crude affair, but bravely ended, and something in the dramatic suddenness of this victory had held all eyes to the close. Bud and Gracia passed out of town unnoticed, and as soon as they had rounded the point they spurred on till they gained the pass.

"I knew you would come!" said Gracia, smiling radiantly as they paused at the fork.

"Sure!" answered Hooker with his

good-humored smile. "Count me in on anything—which way does this trail go; do you know?"

"It goes west twelve miles toward Arispe," replied Gracia confidently, "and then it comes into the main road that leads north to Nogales and Gadsden."

"What is there up here?" inquired Bud, pointing at a fainter trail that led off toward the north. "This country is new to me. Don't know, eh? Well, if we followed that trail we'd run into them rebels, anyway, so we might as well go to the west. Is your saddle all right? We'll hit it up then—I'd like to strike a road before dark."

They hurried on, following a well-marked trail that alternately climbed ridges and descended into arroyos, until finally it dropped down into a precipitous cañon where a swollen stream rushed and babbled and, while they still watched expectantly for the road, the evening quickly passed.

First the slanting rays of the sun struck fire from high yellow crags, then the fire faded and the sky glowed an opal-blue; then, through dark blues and purples the heavens turned to black above them and all the stars came out. Thousands of frogs made the cañon resound with their throaty songs and strange animals crashed through the brush at their approach, but still Hooker stayed in the saddle and Gracia followed on behind.

If she had thought in her dreams of an easier journey she made no comment now and, outside of stopping to cinch up her saddle, Bud seemed hardly to know she was there. The trail was not going to suit him—it edged off too far to the south—and yet, in the tropical darkness, he could not search out new ways to go.

At each fork he paused to light a match, and whichever way the mule-tracks went he went also, for pack-mules would take the main trail. For two hours and more they followed on down the stream and then Hooker stopped his horse.

"You might as well get down and rest a while," he said quietly. "This trail is no good—it's taking us south. We'll let our horses feed until the moon comes up and I'll try to work north by landmarks."

"Oh—are we lost?" gasped Gracia, dropping stiffly to the ground. "But of course we are," she added. "I've been thinking so for some time."

"Oh, that's all right," observed Hooker philosophically; "I don't mind being lost as long as I know where I'm at. We'll ride back until we get out of this dark cañon and then I'll lay a line due north."

They sat for a time in the darkness while their horses champed at the rich grass and then, unable to keep down her nerves, Gracia declared for a start. A vision of angry pursuers rose up in her mind—of Manuel del Rey and his keen-eyed *rurales*, hot upon their trail—and it would not let her rest.

Nor was the vision entirely the result of nervous imagination, for they had lost half the advantage of their start, as Hooker well knew, and if he made one more false move he would find himself called on to fight. As they rode back through the black cañon he asked himself for the hundredth time how it had all happened—why, at a single glance from her, he had gone against his better judgment and plunged himself into this tangle. And then, finally, what was he going to do about it?

Alone, he would have taken to the mountains with a fine disregard for trails, turning into whichever served his purpose best and following the lay of the land. Even with her in his care it would be best to do that yet, for there would be trailers on their track at sunup, and it was either ride or fight.

Free at last from the pent-in cañon, they halted at the forks, while Bud looked out the land by moonlight. Dim and ghostly, the square-topped peaks and buttes rose all about him, huge and impassable except for the winding trails. He turned up a valley between two ridges, spurring his horse into a fast walk.

From one cow trail to another he picked out a way to the north, but the lay of the ground threw him to the east and there were no passes between the hills. The country was rocky, with long parallel ridges extending to the northeast, and when he saw where the way was taking him Bud called a halt till dawn.

By the very formation he was being gradually edged back toward Fortuna, and it would call for fresh horses and a rested Gracia to outstrip their pursuers by day. If the *rurales* traveled by landmarks, heading for the northern passes in an effort to outride and intercept him, they might easily cut him off at the start; but if they trailed him—and he devoutly hoped they

would—then they would have a tangled skein to follow and he could lose them in the broken country to the north.

So thinking, he cut grass among the rocks, spread down their saddle-blankets, and watched over the browsing horses while Gracia stretched out on the bed. After a day of excitement and a night of hard riding there is no call for a couch of down, and as the morning star appeared in the east she slept while Bud sat patiently by.

It was no new task to him, this watching and waiting for the dawn. For weeks at a time, after a hard day's work at the branding, he had stood guard half the night. Sleep was a luxury to him, like water to a mountain-sheep—and so were all the other useless things that town-bred people required.

People like Gracia, people like Phil—they were different in all their ways. To ride, to fight, to find the way—there he was a better man than Phil; but to speak to a woman, to know her ways, and to enter into her life—there he was no man at all.

He sighed now as he saw the first flush of dawn and turned to where she slept, calm and beautiful, in the solemn light. How to waken her, even that was a question, but the time had come to start.

Already, from Fortuna, Del Rey and his man-killing *rurales* would be on the trail. He would come like the wind, that dashing little captain, and nothing but a bullet would stop him, for his honor was at stake. Nay, he had told Bud in so many words:

"She is mine, and no man shall come between us!"

It would be hard now if the *rurales* should prove too many for him—if a bullet should check him in their flight and she be left alone. But how to wake her! He tramped near as he led up the unwilling mounts; then, as time pressed, he spoke to her, and at last he knelt at her side.

"Say!" he called, and when that did not serve he laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Wake up!" he said, shaking her gently. "Wake up, it's almost day!"

Even as he spoke he went back to the phrase of the cow-camp—where men rise before it is light. But Gracia woke up wondering and stared about her strangely, unable to understand.

"Why—what is it?" she cried. Then, as he spoke again and backed away, she remembered him with a smile.

"Oh," she said, "is it time to get up? Where are we, anyway?"

"About ten miles from Fortuna," answered Hooker soberly. "Too close—we ought to be over that divide."

He pointed ahead to where the valley narrowed and passed between two hills, and Gracia sat up, binding back her hair that had fallen from its place.

"Yes, yes!" she said resolutely. "We must go on—but why do you look at me so strangely?"

"Don't know," mumbled Bud. "Didn't know I was. Say, let me get them saddle-blankets, will you?"

He went about his work with embarrassed swiftness, slapping on saddles and bridles, coiling up ropes, and offering her his hand to mount. When he looked at her again it was not strangely.

"Hope you can ride," he said. "We got to get over that pass before anybody else makes it—after that we can take a rest."

"As fast as you please," she answered steadily. "Don't think about me. But what will happen if—they get there first?"

She was looking at him now as he searched out the trail ahead, but he pretended not to hear. One man in that pass was as good as a hundred, and there were only two things he could do—shoot his way through, or turn back. He believed she would not want to turn back.

XXV

THOUGH the times had turned to war, all nature that morning was at peace, and they rode through a valley of flowers like knight and lady in a pageant. The rich grass rose knee-deep along the hillsides, the desert trees were filigreed with the tenderest green and twined with morning-glories, and in open glades the poppies and sand-verbenas spread forth masses of blue and gold.

Already on the mesquit-trees the mocking-birds were singing, and bright flashes of tropical color showed where cardinal and yellow-throat passed. The dew was still untouched upon the grass, and yet they hurried on, for some premonition whispered to them of evil, and they thought only to gain the far pass.

To the west and north rose the high and impassable mountain which had barred their way in the night; across the valley the flat-topped Fortunas threw their bul-

wark against the dawn; and all behind was broken hills and gulches, any one of which might give up armed men. Far ahead, like a knife-gash between the ridges, lay the pass to the northern plains, and as their trail swung out into the open they put spurs to their horses and galloped.

Once through that gap, the upper country would lie before them and they could pick and choose. Now they must depend upon speed and the chance that their way was not blocked.

Somewhere in those hills to the east Bernardo Bravo and his men were hidden. Or perhaps they were scattered, turned by their one defeat into roving bandits or vengeful partizans, laying waste the Sonoran ranches as they fought their way back to Chihuahua. There were a hundred evil chances that might befall the fugitives, and while Bud scanned the country ahead Gracia cast anxious glances behind.

"They are coming!" she cried at last, as a moving spot appeared in the rear. "Oh, there they are!"

"Good!" breathed Hooker, as he rose in his stirrups and looked.

"Why good?" she demanded curiously.

"They's only three of 'em," answered Bud. "I was afraid they might be in front," he explained, as she gazed at him with a puzzled smile.

"Yes," she said; "but what will you do if they catch us?"

"They won't catch us," replied Hooker confidently. "Not while I've got my rifle. Aha!" he exclaimed, still looking back, "now we know all about it—that sorrel is Manuel del Rey's!"

"And will you kill him?" challenged Gracia, rousing suddenly at the name. Hooker pretended not to hear. Instead, he cocked his eye up at the eastern mountain, whence from time to time came muffled rifle-shots, and turned his horse to go. There was trouble over there to the east somewhere—Alvarez and his Yaquis, still harrying the retreating rebels—and some of it might come their way.

"Ah, how I hate that man!" raged Gracia, spurring her horse as she scowled back at the galloping Del Rey and his men who were riding onward rapidly.

"All right," observed Bud with a quizzical smile, "I'll have to kill him for you then!"

She gazed at him a moment with eyes

that were big with questioning, but the expression on his rugged face baffled her.

"I would not forget it," she cried impulsively. "No, after all I have suffered, I think I could love the man who would meet him face to face! But why do you—ah!" she cried, with a sudden tragic bitterness. "You smile! You have no thought for me—you care nothing that I am afraid of him! Ah, *Dios*, for a man who is brave—to rid me of this devil!"

"Never mind!" returned Bud, his voice thick with rising anger. "If I kill him it won't be for you!"

He jumped Copper Bottom ahead to avoid her, for in that moment she had touched his pride. Yes, she had done more than that—she had destroyed a dream he had, a dream of a beautiful woman, always gentle, always noble, whom he had sworn to protect with his life. Did she think he was a *pelado* Mexican, a hot-country lover, to be inflamed by a glance and a smile? Then Phil could have her!

"Ah, Bud!" she appealed, spurring up beside him, "you did not understand! I know you are brave—and if he comes"—she struck her pistol fiercely—"I will kill him myself!"

"Never mind," answered Bud in a kinder voice. "I'll take care of you. Jest keep your horse in the trail," he added, as she rode on through the brush, "and I'll take care of Del Rey."

He beckoned her back with a jerk of the head and resumed his place in the lead. Here was no place to talk about men and motives. The mountain above was swarming with rebels, there were *rurales* spurring behind—yes, even now, far up on the eastern hillside, he could see armed men—and now one was running to intercept them!

Bud reached for his rifle, jacked up a cartridge, and sat crosswise in his saddle. He rode warily, watching the distant runner, until suddenly he pulled in his horse and threw up a welcoming hand. The man was Amigo—no other could come down a hillside so swiftly—and he was signaling him to wait.

"Who is that man?" asked Gracia, as she reined in at his side. "Do you know him?"

"Sure do!" responded Hooker jovially. "He's the best friend I got in Mexico!"

"*Kai*, Amigo!" he hailed, as the Yaqui came quartering down the hill, and, apparently oblivious of the oncoming pur-

suers, he rode out of the trail to meet him. They struck hands and Amigo flashed his familiar smile, glancing shyly over the horse's back at the daughter of the Aragon.

"I knew horse," he explained, with a gentle caress for Copper Bottom. "My people—up there—kill Mexicans! Where you go?"

"North—to the line," answered Bud, pointing up the pass.

"*Muy malo!*" frowned the Yaqui, glancing once more at the woman behind. "*Muchos revoltosos!*"

"Where?" asked Bud.

"Everywhere!" replied Amigo with a comprehensive wave of the hand. "But no matter," he added simply. "I will go with you. Who are these horsemen behind?"

"*Rurales!*" responded Hooker, and the Yaqui's black eyes dilated.

"Yes," nodded Bud as he read the swift question in their glance. "He is there, too—Del Rey!"

"*Que bueno!*" exclaimed the Indian, fixing his eagle glance upon the riders. He showed his white teeth in a smile. In an instant he saw his opportunity, he saw his enemy riding into a trap, and turned his face to the pass.

"Come!" he said, laying hold of a látigo strap, and as Hooker loped on up the steady incline he ran along at his stirrup. In his right hand he still carried the heavy Mauser, but his sandaled feet bore him forward with tireless strides, and only the heaving of his mighty chest told the story of the pace.

"Let me take your gun," suggested Hooker, as they set off on their race, but Amigo in his warrior's pride only shook his head and motioned him on and on. So at last they gained the rugged summit, where the granite ribs of the mountain crop up through the sands of the wash and the valley slopes away to the north. To the south was Del Rey, still riding after them, but Amigo beckoned Bud beyond the reef and looked out to the north.

"*Revoltosos!*" he exclaimed, pointing a sun-blackened hand at a distant ridge. "*Revoltosos!*" he said again, waving his hand to the east. "Here," waving toward the west, "no!"

"Do you know that country?" inquired Hooker, nodding at the great plain with its chains of parallel Sierras, but the Indian shook his head.

"No," he said; "but the best way is straight for that pass."

He pointed at a distant wedge cut down between the blue of two ridges, and scanned the eastern hills intently.

"Men!" he cried, suddenly indicating the sky-line of the topmost ridge. "I think they are *revoltosos*," he added gravely. "They will soon cross your trail."

"No difference," answered Bud with a smile. "I am not afraid—not with you here, Amigo."

"No, but the woman!" suggested Amigo, who read no jest in his words. "It is better that you should ride on—and leave me here."

He smiled encouragingly, but a wild light was creeping into his eyes and Hooker knew what he meant. He desired to be left alone, to deal with Del Rey after the sure manner of the Yaquis. And yet, why not? Hooker gazed thoughtfully at the oncoming *rurales* and walked swiftly back to Gracia.

"This Indian is a friend of mine," he said, "and I can trust him. He says it will be better for us to ride on—and he will take care of the *rurales*."

"Take care?" questioned Gracia, turning pale at a peculiar matter-of-fact tone in his voice.

"Sure," said Hooker; "he says there are *revoltosos* ahead. It will be better for you, he says, to ride on."

"*Madre de Dios!*" breathed Gracia, clutching at her saddle; and then she nodded her head weakly.

"You better get down for a minute," suggested Hooker, helping her quickly to the ground. "Here, drink some water—you're kinder faint. I'll be right back—jest want to say good-by."

He strode over to where Amigo had posted himself behind a rock and laid a hand on his arm.

"*Adios, Amigo!*" he said, but the Yaqui only glanced at him strangely.

"Anything in my camp, you are welcome to it," added Hooker, but Amigo did not respond. His black eyes, far-seeing as a hawk's, were fixed intently before him, where Del Rey came galloping in the lead.

"You go now!" he said, speaking with an effort, and Hooker understood. There was no love, no hate left in that mighty carcass—he was all warrior, all Yaqui, and he wanted Del Rey to himself.

"We'll be going," Hooker said to

Gracia, returning swiftly, and his subdued tones made her start. She felt, as one feels at a funeral, the hovering wings of death, yet she vaulted into her saddle and left her thoughts unsaid.

They rode on down the valley, spurring yet holding back, and then with a roar that made them jump the heavy Mauser spoke out—one shot! And no more. There was a hush, a long wait, and Amigo rose slowly from behind his rock.

"God!" exclaimed Hooker, as he caught the pose, and his voice sounded a requiem for Manuel del Rey.

Then, as Gracia crossed herself and fell to sobbing, he leaned forward in his saddle and they galloped away.

XXVI

THOUGH men may make a jest of it in books, it is a solemn thing to kill a man, even to be near when one is killed. If Gracia had slain Del Rey herself in a passion her hot blood might have buoyed her up, but now her whole nature was convulsed with the horror of it and she wilted like a flower.

An hour before she had burned with hatred of him, she had wished him dead and sought the man who would kill him. Now that his life had been snipped off between two heart-beats she remembered him with pity and muttered a prayer for his soul. For Hooker, for De Lancey she had no thought, but only for the dashing young captain who had followed her to his death.

Of this Bud had no knowledge. He realized only that she was growing weaker, and that he must call a halt, and at last, when the walls of their pass had widened and they rode out into the open plain, he turned aside from the trail and drew rein by a clump of mesquit.

"Here, let me take you," he said, as she swayed uncertainly in the saddle. She slid down into his arms and he laid her gently in the shade.

"Poor girl," he muttered, "it's been too much for you. I'll get some water, and pretty soon you can eat."

He unslung the canteen from his saddle-flap, gave her a drink, and left her to herself, glancing swiftly along the horizon as he tied out their mounts to graze. But for her faintness he would have pushed on farther, for he had seen men off to the east; but hunger and excitement had told

upon her even more than the day-and-night ride.

For a woman, and sitting a side-saddle, she had done better than he had hoped; and yet—well, it was a long way to the border and he doubted if she could make it. She lay still in the shade of the mesquit, just as he had placed her, and when he brought the sack of food she did not raise her head.

"Better eat something," he suggested, spreading out some bread and dried beef. "Here's some oranges I got from Don Juan—I'll jest put them over here for you."

Gracia shuddered, sighing wearily. Then, as if his words had hurt her, she covered her face and wept.

"What did you tell that man?" she asked at last.

"W'y—what man?" inquired Hooker, astonished. "Ain't you going to eat?"

"No!" she cried, gazing out at him through her tears, "not until I know what you said. Did you tell that Indian to—to kill him?"

She broke down suddenly in a fit of sobbing, and Hooker wiped his brow.

"W'y, no!" he protested. "Sure not! What made you think that?"

"Why—you rode over and spoke to him—and he looked at me—and then—he—killed him!"

She gave way to a paroxysm of grief at this, and Bud looked around him, wondering. That she was weak and hungry he knew, but what was this she was saying?

"I reckon I don't understand what you're driving at," he said at last. "Wish you'd eat something—you'll feel better."

"No, I won't eat!" she declared, sitting up and frowning. "Mr. Hooker," she went on very miserably, "what did you mean this morning when you—laughed! I said I hated poor Manuel—and you said—well, what you did—and then you laughed! Did you think—oh, you couldn't have—that I really wanted him killed?"

"W'y, sure not!" cried Hooker heartily. "I knowed you was fooling! Didn't I laugh at you? Say, what kind of a feller do you think I am, anyway? D'ye think I'd get an Indian to do my killing?"

"Oh, then didn't you?" she cried, suddenly brightening up. "You know, you talk so rough sometimes—and I never do know what you mean! You said you guessed you'd have to kill him for me, you

know, and—oh, it was too awful! I must be getting foolish, I'm so tired, but—what did you tell that Indian?"

Bud glanced at her sharply for a moment and then decided to humor her. Perhaps, if he could get her quieted, she would stop talking and begin to eat.

"He asked me who was after us," he said, "and I told him it was Del Rey."

"Yes, and what did he say then?"

"He didn't say nothing—jest lined out for the pass."

"And didn't you say you wanted—him—killed?"

"No!" burst out Bud, half angrily. "Haven't I told you once? I did not! That Indian had reasons of his own, believe me—he's got a scar along his ribs where Del Rey shot him with a six-shooter! And, furthermore," he added, as her face cleared at this explanation of the mystery, "you'd better try to take me at my word for the rest of this trip! Looks to me like you've been associating with these Mexicans too much!"

"Why, what do you mean?" she demanded curtly.

"I mean this," answered Hooker, "being as we're on the subject again. Ever since I've knowed you you've been talking about brave men and all that; and more'n once you've hinted that I wasn't brave because I wouldn't fight."

"I'd jest like to tell you, to put your mind at rest, that my father was a sergeant in the Texas Rangers and no hundred Mexicans was ever able to make him crawl. He served for ten years on the Texas border and never turned his back to no man—let alone a Mex. I was brought up by him to be peaceable and quiet, but don't you never think, because I run away from Manuel del Rey, that I was afraid to face him."

He paused and regarded her intently, and her eyes fell before his.

"You must excuse me," she said, looking wistfully away, "I did not—I did not understand. And so the poor Yaqui was only avenging an injury?" she went on, reaching out one slender hand toward the food. "Ah, I can understand it now—he looked so savage and fierce. But"—she paused again, set back by a sudden thought—"didn't you know he would kill him?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Hooker quietly, "I did!"

"Then—then why didn't you—"

"That was between them two," he replied doggedly. "Del Rey shot him once when he was wounded and left him for dead. He must have killed some of his people, too; his wife mebbe, for all I know. He never would talk about it, but he come back to get his revenge. I don't shoot no man from cover myself, but that ain't it—it was between them two."

"And you?" she suggested. "If you had fought Del Rey?"

"I would have met him in the open," said Hooker.

"And yet—"

"I didn't want to," he ended bluntly. "Didn't want to fight him and didn't want to kill him. Had no call to. And then—well, there was you."

"Ah!" she breathed, and a flush mounted her pale cheeks. She smiled as she reached out once more for the food and Hooker resolved to do his best at gallantry, it seemed to make her so happy.

"So you were thinking of me," she challenged sweetly, "all the while? I thought perhaps I was a nuisance and in the way. I thought perhaps you did not like me because—well, because I'm a Mex, as you say."

"No, ma'am," denied Hooker, gazing upon her admiringly. "Nothing like that! When I say Mex I mean these low, *pelado* Mexicans—Don Juan tells me you're pure Spanish."

"With perhaps a little Yaqui," she suggested slyly.

"Well, mebbe he did say that, too," confessed Bud. "But it's jest as good as Spanish—they say all the big men in Sonora have got some Yaqui blood—Morrall, that was vice-president; the Tornes brothers, governors—"

"And Aragon!" she added playfully, but at a look in his eyes she stopped. Bud could not look pleasant and think of Aragon.

"Ah, yes," she rattled on. "I know! You like the Yaquis better than the Spanish—I saw you shaking hands with that Indian. And what was it you called him—Amigo?"

"That's right," smiled Hooker; "him and me have been friends for months now out at the mine. I'd do anything for that feller."

"Oh, now you make me jealous," she pouted. "If I were only a Yaqui—and big and black—"

"Never mind," defended Bud. "He was a true friend, all right, and true friends, believe *me*, are scarce."

There was a shade of bitterness in his voice that did not escape her, and she was careful not to allude to Phil. His name, like the name of her father, always drove this shy man to silence, and she wanted to make him talk.

"Then you ought to be friends with *me*," she chided, after a silence. "I have always wanted to be your friend—why will you never allow it? No, but really! Haven't I always shown it? I remember now the first time that I saw you—I was looking through my hole among the passion-flowers and you saw me with your keen eyes. Phil did not—but he was there. And you just looked at me once—and looked away. Why did you never respond when I came there to look for you? You would just ride by and look at me once, and even Phil never knew."

"No," agreed Bud, smiling quietly. "He was crazy to see you, but he rode right by, looking at the windows and such."

"The first time I met him," mused Gracia, "I asked about you. Did he ever tell you?"

Bud hung his head and grinned sheepishly. It was not difficult to make out a case against him.

"Is it something I have done?" she asked at last. "Is that why you never liked me? Now, Mr. Hooker, please speak to me! And why do you always sit so far away—are you afraid of me? But look"—she moved closer to him—"here we are alone, and I am not afraid of you!"

"Of course not," answered Bud, looking across at her boldly. "Why should you be—you ain't afraid of nothing!"

"Is that a compliment?" she demanded eagerly. "Oh, then I'm so happy—it's the first you ever paid me! But *have* I been brave," she beamed, "so far? Have I been brave, like a man?"

"Sure have!" remarked Hooker impersonally, "but we ain't there yet. Only thing I don't like about you is you don't eat enough. Say, don't pick up them crumbs—let me pare off some more of this jerked beef for you. Can't nobody be brave when they're hungry, you know, and I want to bring you in safe."

"Why?" she inquired, as she accepted the handful of meat. "Is it on Phil's account?" she ventured, as he sat gazing

stoically at the horses. "You were such friends, weren't you?" she went on innocently. "Oh, that is why I admire the Americans so much—they are so true to each other!"

"Yes," observed Hooker, rolling his eyes on her, "we're fine that way!"

"Well, I mean it!" she insisted, as she read the irony in his glance.

"Sure! So do I!" answered Hooker, and Gracia continued her meal in silence.

"My!" she said at last; "this meat is good! Tell me, how did you happen to have it on your saddle? We left so suddenly, you know!"

She gazed up at him demurely, curious to see how he would evade this evidence that he had prepared in advance for their ride. But once more, as he had always done, Hooker eluded the cunningly laid snare.

"I was figuring on pulling out myself," he replied ingenuously.

"What? And not take me?" she cried. "Oh, I thought—but dear me, what is the use?"

She sighed and drooped her head wearily.

"I am so tired!" she murmured despondently; "shall we be going on soon?"

"Not unless somebody jumps us," returned Bud. "Here, let me make you a bed in the shade. There now"—as he spread out the saddle-blankets temptingly—"you lay down and get some sleep and I'll kinder keep a watch."

"Ah, you are so kind," she breathed, as she sank down on the bed. "Don't you know," she added, looking up at him with sleepy eyes that half concealed a smile, "I believe you like me, after all."

"Sure," confessed Bud, returning her smile as honestly; "don't you worry none about me—I like you fine."

He slipped away at this, grinning to himself, and sat down to watch the plain. All about him lay the waving grass land, tracked up by the hoofs of cattle that had vanished in the track of war. In the distance he could see the line of a fence and the ruins of a house. The trail which he had followed led on and on to the north. But all the landscape was vacant, except for his grazing horses. Above the mountains the midday thunder-caps were beginning to form; the air was very soft and warm, and— He woke up suddenly to find his head on his knees.

"Ump-um-m," he muttered, rising up and shaking himself resolutely, "this won't do—that sun is making me sleepy."

He paced back and forth, smoking fiercely at brown-paper cigarettes, and still the sleep came back. The thunder-clouds over the mountains rose higher and turned to black; they let down skirts and fringes and sudden stabs of lightning, while the wind sucked in from the south. And then, with a slash of rain, the shower was upon them.

At the first big drops Gracia stirred uneasily in her sleep. She started up as the storm burst over them; then, as Bud picked up the saddle-blankets and spread them over her, she drew him down beside her and they sat out the storm together. But it was more to them than a sharing of cover, a patient enduring of the elements, and the sweep of wind and rain. When they rose up there was a bond between them and they thrust and parried no more.

They were friends, there in the rush of falling water and the crash of lightning overhead. When the storm was over and the sun came out they smiled at each other contentedly without fear of what such smiles may mean.

XXVII

As the sun, after a passing storm, comes forth all the more gloriously, so the joy of their new-found friendship changed the world for Bud and Gracia. The rainbow that glowed against the retreating clouds held forth more than a promise of sunshine for them, and they conversed only of pleasant things as they rode on up the trail.

Twenty miles ahead lay the northern pass, and from there it was ten more to Gadsden, but they spoke neither of the pass nor of Gadsden nor of who would be awaiting them there. Their talk was like that of children, inconsequential and happy. They told of the times when they had seen each other, and what they had thought; of the days of their childhood, before they had met at Fortuna; of hopes and fears and thwarted ambitions and all the young dreams of life.

Bud told of his battle-scarred father and their ranch in Arizona; of his mother and horse-breaking brothers, and his wanderings through the West; Gracia of her mother, with nothing of her father, and how she had flirted in order to be sent to school where she could gaze upon the

upstanding Americans. Only Bud thought of the trail and scanned the horizon for rebels, but he seemed more to seek her eyes than to watch for enemies and death.

They rode on until the sun sank low and strange tracks struck their trail from the east. Bud observed that the horses were shod, and more tracks of mounted men came in beyond. He turned sharply toward the west and followed a rocky ledge to the hills, without leaving a hoof-print to mark the way of their retreat.

By the signs the land ahead was full of bandits and *ladrones*, men to whom human life was nothing and a woman no more sacred than a brute. At the pass all trails converged, from the north and from the south. Not by any chance could a man pass over it in the daytime without meeting some one on the way, and if the base *revoltosos* once set eyes upon Gracia it would take more than a nod to restrain them.

So, in a sheltered ravine, they sought cover until it was dark, and while Gracia slept, the heavy-headed Bud watched the plain from the heights above.

When she awoke and found him nodding Gracia insisted upon taking his place. Now that she had been refreshed her dark eyes were bright and sparkling, but Bud could hardly see. The long watching by night and by day had left his eyes blood-shot and swollen, with lids that drooped in spite of him. If he did not sleep now he might doze in the saddle later, or ride blindly into some rebel camp; so he made her promise to call him and lay down to rest until dark.

The stars were all out when he awoke, startled by her hand on his hair, but she reassured him with a word and led him up the hill to their lookout. It was then that he understood her silence. In the brief hours during which he had slept the deserted country seemed suddenly to have come to life.

By daylight there had been nothing—nothing but dim figures in the distance and the tracks of horses and mules—to suggest the presence of men. But now as the velvet night settled down upon the land it brought out the glimmering specks of a hundred camp-fires to the east and to the north. But the fires to which Gracia pointed were set fairly in their trail, and they barred the way to Gadsden.

"Look!" she said. "I did not want to wake you, but the fires have sprung up

everywhere. These last ones are right in the pass."

"When did you see them?" asked Hooker, his head still heavy with sleep. "Have they been there long?"

"No; only a few minutes," she answered. "At sundown I saw those over to the east—they are along the base of that big black mountain—but these flashed up just now; and see, there are more, and more!"

"Some outfit coming in from the north," said Bud. "They've crossed over the pass and camped at the first water this side."

"Who do you think they are?" asked Gracia in an awed voice. "*Insurrectos?*"

"Like as not," muttered Bud, gazing from encampment to encampment. "But whoever they are," he added, "they're no friends of ours. We've got to go around them."

"And if we can't?" suggested Gracia.

"I reckon we'll have to go through, then," answered Hooker grimly. "We don't want to get caught here in the morning."

"Ride right through their camp?" gasped Gracia.

"Let the sentries get to sleep," he went on, half to himself. "Then, just before the moon comes up, we'll try to edge around them, and if it comes to a showdown, we'll ride for it! Are you game?"

He turned to read the answer, and she drew herself up proudly.

"Try me!" she challenged, drawing nearer to him in the darkness. And so they stood, side by side, while their hands clasped in promise. Then, as the night grew darker and no new fires appeared, Hooker saddled up the well-fed horses and they picked their way down to the trail.

The first fires were far ahead, but they proceeded at a walk, their horses' feet falling silently upon the sodden ground. Not a word was spoken and they halted often to listen, for others, too, might be abroad. The distant fires were dying now, except a few, where men rose up to feed them.

The braying of burros came in from the flats to the right and as the fugitives drew near the first encampment they could hear the voices of the night guards as they rode about the horse herd. Then, as they waited impatiently, the watch-fires died down, the guards no longer sang their high falsetto, and even the burros were still.

It was approaching the hour of mid-

night, and as their horses twitched restively at the bits they gave them the rein and rode ahead at a venture.

At their left the last embers of the fires revealed the sleeping forms of men; to their right, somewhere in the darkness, was the night herd and the herders. They lay low on their horses' necks, not to cast a silhouette against the sky, and let Copper Bottom pick the trail.

With ears that pricked and swiveled, and delicate nostrils snuffing the Mexican taint, he plodded along through the greasewood, divining by some instinct his master's need of care. The camp was almost behind them, and Bud had straightened up in the saddle, when suddenly the watchful Copper Bottom jumped and a man rose up from the ground.

"Who goes there?" he mumbled, swaying sleepily above his gun, and Hooker reined his horse away before he gave him an answer.

"None of your business," he growled impatiently. "I am going to the pass." And as the sentry stared stupidly after him he rode on through the bushes, neither hurrying nor halting until he gained the trail.

"Good luck!" he observed to Gracia, when the camp was far behind. "He took me for an officer and never saw you at all."

"No, I flattened myself on my pony," answered Gracia with a laugh. "He thought you were leading a packhorse."

"Good," chuckled Hooker; "you did fine! Now don't say another word—because they'll notice a woman's voice—and if we don't run into some more of them we'll soon be climbing the pass."

The waning moon came out as they left the wide valley behind them, and then it disappeared again as they rode into the gloomy shadows of the cañon. For an hour or two they plodded slowly upward, passing through narrow defiles and into moonlit spaces, and still they did not mount the summit.

In the east the dawn began to break and they spurred on in almost a panic. The Mexican *paisanos* count themselves late if they do not take the trail at sunup—what if they should meet some straggling party before they reached the pass?

Bud jumped Copper Bottom up a series of cat steps; Gracia's roan came scrambling behind; and then, just as the boxed walls ended and they gained a level spot,

they suddenly found themselves in the midst of a camp of Mexicans—men, saddles, packs, and rifles, all scattered at their feet.

"*Buenos días!*" saluted Bud, as the blinking men rose up from their blankets. "Excuse me, *amigos*, I am in a hurry!"

"*A donde va? A donde va?*" challenged a bearded man as he sprang up from his brush shelter.

"To the pass, *señor*," answered Hooker, still politely, but motioning for Gracia to ride on ahead. "*Adios!*"

"Who is that man?" bellowed the bearded leader, turning furiously upon his followers. "Where is my sentinel? Stop him!"

But it was too late to stop him. Bud laid his quirt across the rump of the roan and spurred forward in a dash for cover. They whisked around the point of a hill as the first scattered shots rang out; and, as a frightened sentinel jumped up in their path Bud rode him down. The man dropped his gun to escape the fury of the charge and in a mad clatter they flung themselves at a rock-slide and scrambled to the bench above. The path was rocky, but they pressed forward at a gallop until, as the sun came up, they beheld the summit of the pass.

"We win!" cried Bud, as he spurred up the last incline.

As he looked over the top he exploded in an oath and jerked Copper Bottom back on his haunches. The leader of a long line of horsemen was just coming up the other side, not fifty feet below him. Bud looked to each side—there was no escape—and then back at the frightened girl.

"Keep behind me," he commanded, "and don't shoot. I'm going to hold 'em up!"

He jumped his horse out to one side and landed squarely on the rim of the ridge. Gracia drew her horse in behind him and reached for the pistol in her holster; then both together they drew their guns and Bud threw down on the first man.

"Go on!" he ordered, motioning him forward with his head; "*pr-r-ronto!*" He jerked out his rifle with his left hand and laid it across his lap.

"Hurry up now," he raged, as the startled Mexican halted. "Go on and keep a going, and the first man that makes a break I'll shoot him full of holes!"

He sat like a statue on his shining horse,

his six-shooter balanced to shoot, and something in his very presence—the bulk of his body, the forward thrust of his head, and the burning hate of his eyes—quelled the spirits of the rebels. They were a rag-tag army, mounted on horses and donkeys and mules and with arms of every known make.

The fiery glances of the American made them cringe as they had always cringed before their masters, and his curses turned their blood to water. He towered above them like a giant, pouring forth a torrent of oaths and beckoning them on their way, and the leader was the first to yield.

With hands half-raised and jaw on his breast he struck spurs to his frightened mule and went dashing over the ridge.

The others followed by twos and threes, some shrinking, some protesting, some gazing forth villainously from beneath their broad hats. As they looked back he whirled upon them and swore he would kill the first man that dared to turn his head.

After all, they were a generation of slaves, those low-browed, unthinking peons, and war had not made them brave. They passed on, the whole long line of bewildered soldiery, looking in vain for the men that were behind the American, staring blankly at the beautiful woman who sat so courageously by his side.

When the last had gone by Bud picked up his rifle and watched him around the point. Then he smiled grimly at Gracia, whose eyes were still round with wonder, and led the way down the trail.

XXVIII

THE high pass and the *insurrectos* were behind them now and the rolling plains of Agua Negra were at their feet. To the northeast the smoke banners of the Gadsden smelters lay like ribbons across the sky, and the line was not far away.

Yet, as they came down from the mountains, Bud and Gracia fell silent and slackened their slashing pace. The time for parting was near, and partings are always sad.

Bud looked far out across the valley to where a train puffed in from the south, and the sight of it made him uneasy. He watched still as it lay at the station and, after a prolonged stare in the direction of Agua Negra, he reined sharply to the north.

"What is it?" asked Gracia, coming out of her reverie.

"Oh, nothing," answered Bud, slumping down in his saddle. "I see the railroad is open again—they might be somebody up there looking for us."

"You mean—"

"Well, say a bunch of *rurales*."

He turned still farther to the north as he spoke and spurred his jaded horse on. Gracia kept her roan beside him, but he took no notice, except as he scanned the line with his bloodshot eyes. He was a hard-looking man now, with a rough stubble of beard on his face and a sullen set to his jaw. As two horsemen rode out from distant Agua Negra he turned and glanced at Gracia.

"Seems like we been on the run ever since we left Fortuna," he said with a rueful smile. "Are you good for just one more?"

"What is it now?" she inquired, pulling herself together with an effort. "Are those two men coming out to meet us? Do you think they'd stop us?"

"That's about our luck," returned Hooker. "But when we dip out of sight in this swale here we'll turn north and hit for the line."

"All right," she agreed. "My horse is tired, but I'll do whatever you say, Bud."

She tried to catch his eyes at this, but he seemed lost in contemplation of the horsemen.

"Them's *rurales*," he said at last, "and heading straight for us—but we've come too far to get caught now. Come on!" he added bruskiy, and went galloping up the swale.

For two miles they rode up the wash, their heads below the level of the plain, but as Bud emerged at the mouth of the gulch and looked warily over the cut bank he suddenly reached for his rifle and measured the distance to the line.

"They was too foxy for me," he muttered, as Gracia looked over at the approaching *rurales*. "But I can stand 'em off," he added, "so you go ahead."

"No!" she cried, coming out in open rebellion. "Well, I won't leave you—that's all!" she declared, as he turned to command her. "Oh, come along, Bud!" She laid an impulsive hand on his arm and he thrust his gun back into the sling with a thud.

"All right!" he said. "Can't stop to

talk about it. Go ahead—and flay the hide off of that roan!"

They were less than a mile from the line, but the *rurales* had foreseen their ruse in dropping into the gulch and had turned at the same time to intercept them. They were pushing their fresh horses to the utmost now across the open prairie, and as the roan lagged and faltered in his stride Bud could see that the race was lost.

"Head for that monument!" he called to Gracia, pointing toward one of the international markers as he faced their pursuers. "You'll make it—they won't shoot a woman!"

He reached for his gun as he spoke.

"No, no!" she cried. "Don't you stop! If you do I will! Come on!" she entreated, checking her horse to wait for him. "You ride behind me—they won't dare shoot at us then!"

Bud laughed shortly and wheeled in behind her, returning his gun to its sling.

"All right," he said, "we'll ride it out together then!"

He laid the quirt to the roan. In the whirl of racing bushes a white monument flashed up suddenly before them. The *rurales* were within pistol-shot and whipping like mad to head them. Another figure came flying along the line, a horseman, waving his hands and motioning. Then, riding side by side, they broke across the boundary with the baffled *rurales* yelling savagely at their heels.

"Keep a going!" prompted Hooker, as Gracia leaned back to check her horse; "down into the gulch there—they *rurales* are liable to shoot yet!"

The final dash brought them to cover, but as Bud leaped down and took Gracia in his arms the roan spread his feet, trembled, and dropped heavily to the ground.

"He'll be all right," soothed Bud, as Gracia still clung to his arm. Then, as he saw her gaze fixed beyond him, he turned and beheld Philip De Lancey.

It was the same Phil, the same man Bud had called pardner, and yet when Hooker saw him there he stiffened and his face grew hard.

"Well?" he said, slowly detaching Gracia's fingers and putting her hand away.

As Phil ran forward to greet them he stepped sullenly off to one side. What they said he did not know, for his mind was suddenly a blank; but when Phil

rushed over and wrung his hand he came back to earth with a start.

"Bud!" cried De Lancey ecstatically, "how can I ever thank you enough! You brought her back to me, didn't you, old man? Thank God you're safe—I've been watching for you with glasses ever since I heard you had started! I knew you would do it, pardner; you're the best friend a man ever had! But—say, come over here a minute—I want to speak to you."

He led Hooker off to one side, while Gracia watched them with jealous eyes, and lowered his voice as he spoke.

"It was awful good of you, Bud," he whispered, "but I'm afraid you've got in bad! The whole town is crazy about it. Old Aragon came up on the first train, and now they've wired that you killed Del Rey. By Jove, Bud, wasn't that pulling it a little strong? Captain of the *rurales*, you know—the whole Mexican government is behind him—and Aragon wants you for kidnaping!"

"What's that?" demanded Gracia, as she heard her own name spoken.

Bud looked at Phil, who for once was at a loss for words, and then he answered slowly.

"Your father is down at the station," he said, "looking for—you."

"Well, he can't have me!" cried Gracia defiantly. "I'm across the line now! I'm free! I can do what I please!"

"But there's the immigration office," interposed Phil pacifically. "You will have to go there—and your father has claimed you were kidnaped."

"Ha! Kidnaped!" laughed Gracia, who had suddenly recovered her spirits. "And by whom?"

"Well—by Bud here," answered De Lancey hesitatingly.

Gracia turned as he spoke and surveyed Hooker with a mocking smile. Then she laughed again.

"Never mind," she said, "I'll fix that. I'll tell them that I kidnaped *him*!"

"No, but seriously!" protested De Lancey, as Bud chuckled hoarsely. "You can't cross the line without being passed by the inspectors, and—well, your father is there to get you back."

"But I will not go!" flung back Gracia.

"Oh, my dear girl!" cried De Lancey, frowning in his perplexity, "you don't understand, and you make it awful hard for me. You know they're very strict now

—so many low women coming across the line, for—well, the fact is, unless you are married you can't come in at all!"

"But I'm *in*!" protested Gracia, flushing hotly. "I'm—"

"They'll deport you," said De Lancey, stepping forward to give her support.

"I know it's hard, dear," he went on, as Bud moved hastily away, "but I've got it all arranged. Why should we wait? You came to marry me, didn't you? Well, you must do it now—right away! I've got the license and the priest all waiting—come on before the *rurales* get back to town and report that you've crossed the line. We can ride around to the north and come in at the other side of town. Then we—"

"Oh, no, no!" cried Gracia, pushing him impulsively aside. "I am not ready now. And—"

She paused and glanced at Bud.

"Mr. Hooker," she began, walking gently toward him, "what will you do now?"

"I don't know," answered Hooker huskily.

"Will you come with us—will you—"

"No," said Bud, shaking his head slowly.

"Then I must say good-by?"

She waited, but he did not answer.

"You have been so good to me," she went on, "so brave, and—have I been brave, too?" she broke in pleadingly.

Hooker nodded his head, but he did not meet her eyes.

"Ah, yes," she sighed. "You have heard what Phil has said. I wish now that my mother were here, but—would you mind? Before I go I want to—give you a kiss!"

She reached out her hands impulsively and Hooker started back. His eyes, which had been downcast, blazed suddenly as he gazed at her, and then they flitted to Phil.

"No," he said, and his voice was lifeless and choked.

"You will not?" she asked, after a pause.

"No!" he said again, and she shrank away before his glance.

"Then good-by," she murmured, turning away like one in a dream, and Bud heard the crunch of her steps as she went toward the horses with Phil. Then, as the tears welled to his eyes, he heard a resounding slap and a rush of approaching feet.

"No!" came the voice of Gracia, vibrant with indignation. "I say *no!*" The spat of her hand rang out again and then, with a piteous sobbing, she came running back to Bud, halting with the stiffness of her long ride.

"I hate you!" she screamed, as Phil came after her. "Oh, I hate you! No, you shall *never* have the kiss! What! if Bud here has refused it, will I give a kiss to *you*? Ah, you poor, miserable creature!" she cried, wheeling upon him in a sudden fit of passion. "Where were *you* when I was in danger? Where were *you* when

there was no one to save me? And did you think, then, to steal a kiss, when my heart was sore for Bud? Ah, coward! You are no fit pardner! No, I will never marry you—never! Well, go then! And hurry! Oh, how I hate you—to try to steal me from Bud!"

She turned and threw her arms about Hooker's neck and drew his rough face down to hers.

"You do love me, don't you, Bud?" she sobbed. "Oh, you are so good—so brave! And now will you take the kiss?"

"Try me!" said Bud.

THE END

GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON'S NEXT NOVEL COMPLETE IN THE DECEMBER MUNSEY

IT is an editorial pleasure to announce that the book-length novel to be published complete in the December number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE will be from the pen of George Barr McCutcheon, author of "The Hollow of Her Hand," which appeared serially in MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE, "Graustark," "Brewster's Millions," and other books.

The title of this very latest McCutcheon work, "Black Is White," is no more mystifying in its promise than the story justifies. Readers familiar with McCutcheon will find this his strongest book, and those who have not yet made the acquaintance of this popular writer have a surprising feast ahead of them.

"Black Is White" is the story of a man with a sorrow in his breast, a man whom remorse could not bend nor suffering break. It brings back to us with startling force the realization that a man still must reap as he sows, in spite of all our modern diversions for the dulling of conscience and the dodging of pain and care. That remains the immutable truth of compensation, no matter how fast we live or how far we go.

This is a story of strong emotions; of human subtleties, human suffering, and human love. The mysterious and the ghostly dominate the tale like Oriental incense—not overpowering, but fascinatingly elusive. And there are touches of humor in it which lift the heart like a song.

McCutcheon has a faculty for sounding the depths of the human heart and spreading its analysis upon his pages, which is a rare gift among the army of writers of the quick-lunch fiction of this breathless age. You feel the yearnings of the lad who longs for his father's love in reading "Black Is White" almost as poignantly as if you were living his somber, lonely life yourself. Perhaps nothing should have been said of this lad—perhaps you should have been left in ignorance of his existence until his presentation in the story. But there are so many surprises in it that this one can be spared. And this boy will be remembered as one of the most pathetic and lovable figures in contemporary literature.

It is fitting that "Black Is White" should go to you at Christmas time, for there is in it a strain of exaltation and triumph over suffering which stirs the soul like an anthem sounding out of the shadows of cathedral depths.

This series of complete novels began with "The Flying Courtship," by E. J. Rath, published in the June number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE. "The Kangaroo," by Harris Dickson, followed in July, and "The Little Nugget," by P. G. Wodehouse, in August; "The Wasp," by Theodore Goodridge Roberts, in September; "The Hour of Conflict," by A. Hamilton-Gibbs, in October. The numbers containing these stories are still in stock, and can be ordered from any newsdealer, or from the publishers, price fifteen cents each.



RANJAB FLUNG HIMSELF FORWARD AND GRASPED HIS MASTER'S ARM

Drawn by A. I. Keller

[See complete novel, "Black Is White," page 505]